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1

HISTORY
OF
BRITISH GUIANA,

FROM THE YEAR 1668 TO THE PRESENT TIME:

BY

JAMES RODWAY, F.L.S.

VOLUME I.

1668—1781.



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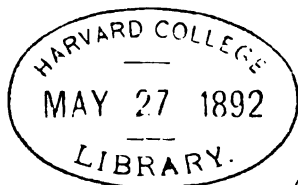
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J. THOMSON.

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Contents of the First Volume.

	PAGE.
Introduction	1
CHAPTER I.	
The Trading Factories, 1668-1688	10
CHAPTER II.	
The Privateers, 1689-1714	44
CHAPTER III.	
Essequibo as a Young Colony, 1714-1738	63
CHAPTER IV.	
Establishment of the Berbice Association, 1714-1733	85
CHAPTER V.	
Essequibo open to all Nations, 1738-1744	100
CHAPTER VI.	
Founding of Demerara, 1745-1750	119
CHAPTER VII.	
Progress of the "Two Rivers," 1750-1762	134
CHAPTER VIII.	
Berbice as a Colony, 1735-1759	153
CHAPTER IX.	
The Berbice Slave Insurrection, 1760-1767	171
CHAPTER X.	
The last years of Gravesande's Administration, 1763-1772	215
CHAPTER XI.	
The "Two Rivers" Reorganised, 1772-1780	235
CHAPTER XII.	
The Berbice Association and the Planters, 1768-1780	263
CHAPTER XIII.	
The Three Rivers Captured by the British, 1781	272

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HISTORY OF BRITISH GUIANA.

INTRODUCTION.

Vicissitudes of the Colonies—First Trading Posts of Guiana—Brief account of progress before 1668—The Dutch political system.

THE story of the Colonies which now form British Guiana, is one of plodding perseverance rather than conquest. The country has suffered from the raids of privateers, capture by the enemy, slave revolts, endemic diseases and bad government, the recovery from which evils shows that the early colonists were not easily disheartened. Situated in the tropics, in what is naturally perhaps one of the most unhealthy parts of the world for Europeans, every acre at present in cultivation has been the scene of a struggle with the sea in front and the flood behind. As a result of this arduous labour during two centuries, a narrow strip of land along the coast has been rescued from the mangrove swamp, and kept under cultivation by an elaborate system of dams and dykes. Scattered along the rivers and creeks lie a thousand abandoned plantations, most of them undistinguishable from the surrounding forest; these represent the failures of the early settlers. At first sight the narrow line of sugar estates seems but a very poor show for such a long struggle with nature, but when all the circumstances are taken into consideration, it is almost a wonder that the colony has not been abandoned

altogether. In giving an account of the successes and failures of Dutch, English and French colonists in British Guiana, I shall endeavour to trace the different factors in what was generally very slow progress, but oftener looked like retrogression.

In some respects the history of Essequibo, Berbice and Demerara, is like that of the West Indies generally. They owed their very existence to the negro slave trade, without which it is probable they would never have got beyond the first stage of Trading Factories. Although the country was fairly well peopled, having hundreds of Indian villages scattered along the banks of its rivers, the aborigines had very little influence in developing the colonies. Nevertheless the natural owners of the land had to be taken into account and to be conciliated before even a trader could establish his depôt. The fierce and warlike Carib held his own against the Spaniard along the whole line of seaboard from the Orinoco to the Amazon, and it was only by the fellow-feeling of enmity to a common foe, that the Dutchman was able to carry on his trade. The fact that the Netherlands were at war with Spain, was the great point in favour of the Hollander, while his justice and kindness to the natives, in all his dealings, gradually produced a feeling of cordiality, that had not hitherto existed between the red and white man.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, small Dutch vessels began to trade in the West Indies for salt,—an article of prime necessity for the fisheries. This trade became of such importance in the first quarter of the following century, that the English coupled the Dutch and Spaniards together under the title of “Lords of the West Indies.” A hundred vessels were employed annually in bringing salt from different places, one of which was Araya in Venezuela. Some of the traders sailed along the coast of Guiana and opened up a traffic with the

natives. Axes and knives, beads, trinkets and gaudy ornaments, were exchanged for cotton, hammocks, pita hemp, anatto, letter-wood, gum animi, balsam copaiba, and last, but by no means least, the Dutchman's idol, tobacco. As the natives lived from hand to mouth, the traders were often disappointed in getting what they wanted, or subject to great delay while negotiable articles were being collected. To prevent this, depôts were established, and a few men left in charge of a little store until the return of the vessel. Two such depôts were established in Guiana about the year 1580, the one in the Pomeroon, and the other at a small Indian village called Nibie in the Abary Creek. Thus commenced the Dutch settlement of this colony. As very few men could be spared from the vessels, only about ten were left at the store, one of whom was naturally made Commander, with all powers of administering justice and settling quarrels among his subordinates. Provisions were supplied and kept in the store, from which they were distributed in rations according to the rules on board ship. The Commander superintended the trade and kept the goods in order, fixing the quantity of cotton or balsam copaiba which should buy an axe or knife. The Indians were naturally very pleased to have a shop near them, and would often make an extra number of hammocks or cut a few logs of letter-wood, so as to get some coveted article. When the vessel returned, the Commander gave account of his transactions and generally went back to the father-land, while another of the crew was left to remain during the ensuing year.

In the early part of the seventeenth century the post was removed from the Pomeroon to a little island at the junction of the three rivers, Essequibo, Massaruni, and Cuyuni. Here a more substantial post was established, in a building said to have been erected there by Spaniards about 1591. A fort was built and armed with a few small guns and named

in honour of an influential Dutch gentleman, Fort ter Hoogen, but this appellation soon gave place to the descriptive name of Kyk-over-al (See over all). The poor fellows who resided at this lonely spot from the departure of one vessel until the arrival of her successor, were provided with a few Indian slaves, to act as general servants. With their aid small fields of cassava and other vegetables were planted at Cartabo Point, and thus the first cultivation for Europeans in Essequibo was commenced.

In 1621 the merchants of Zeeland who had established the trade with Essequibo joined with others to form the West India Company. With its grant of all unoccupied territory on the West of Africa and East of America, it naturally became the possessor of Essequibo and its little fort. As soon as the Company was in working order, a Commandeur and a few soldiers were sent to Kyk-over-al, and the settlement became a military as well as a trading establishment. The Company tried to increase the traffic, but without much success, as it spent very little money on such a paltry place, while the captured Spanish Galleons were giving millions of prize money and Brazil was ready to fall to its arms. The regular vessel was sent annually, but little profit resulted, since the expense of even this small military establishment made the difference between profit and loss as compared with its late position as a private trading post. The question of its abandonment was often mooted, but as there were always a few Zeelanders in the Company who hoped for better results in the future and voted for its continuance, Kyk-over-al was allowed to remain. However, in the year 1657, when the Company had lost Brazil and was insolvent, so that even a small loss could no longer be borne, it was resolved to abandon Essequibo. The old supporters of the settlement then came forward and offered to take over all the settlements in Guiana, which then included a little colony in

Cayenne. This was agreed upon after some deliberation, and a Company consisting of the Burgomasters of Middleburg, Vlissengen and Vere, together with certain other shareholders of the Company, became lessees of Guiana, which they now named Nova Zeelandia, on condition of paying the Company 250 Flemish pounds (£125) annually from the profits of the sale of Anatto.

The Zeelandia Company, as it may be called, immediately set to work to put the existing settlements into better order, and establish others, one of the latter being in the Pomeroon, which was really the first attempt to colonise Essequibo. Two Commandeurs were appointed, the principal to govern at Kyk-over-al and his subordinate in the new colony, and every inducement offered to intending settlers. Pamphlets were published, giving exaggerated accounts of the wonderful fortunes to be made by growing sugar in Nova Zeelandia, one of them being translated into German, in hopes of enticing the people of the neighbouring States to emigrate. According to this work there were many advantages in Guiana as compared with the New Netherlands (New York). Land was free, slaves could be obtained on credit, and in two or three years a man might own a fine estate worth several thousand guilders. Commandeur GROENWEGEL sailed for Kyk-over-al in the early part of 1658, together with CORNELIS GOLJAT his subordinate, and a number of emigrants for the new colony. A vessel was sent to Africa for a load of slaves, a fort was built, and a town laid out (on paper), and altogether a fair beginning was made. Many of the new settlers were Jews who had been in Brazil, and under their tuition a number of small plantations were cleared and planted with canes. Soon afterwards sugar from Nova Zeelandia was on sale in Middelburg, and the Company was congratulating itself on the progress it was making. This fair prospect did not last long ; in 1665 England declared war

against the Netherlands, and early in 1666, Major JOHN SCOTT, under the guidance of a party of Caribs, attacked the Pomeroon colony, destroyed its little fort, and pillaged and burnt the plantations. Going on to Kyk-over-al he captured that also, and leaving a small garrison to hold it for England, went back to Barbados to boast of having done a wonderful amount of damage to the enemy. The few English soldiers were soon routed out of Kyk-over-al by the Commandeur of Berbice and subsequently the fort was re-garrisoned in 1667 by Commodore CRYNSEN on behalf of the States of Zeeland. Almost without provisions, and entirely devoid of articles of trade, Kyk-over-al and Pomeroon waited for supplies, and waited for a long time in vain. The Zeelandia Company was ruined, all its advances had gone for nothing, while the debts on slaves were irrecoverable from the ruined settlers. The shareholders would not risk any further advances, and it appeared as if Essequibo was now about to be finally abandoned.

Meanwhile, Berbice had been established as a trading post in 1627, by ABRAHAM VAN PEERE, one of the Directors of the West India Company. Under the arrangements with the Company, he became Patroon of a settlement that he intended to establish at his own expense, over which he would have entire control. Two small vessels sailed for the new colony on the 31st of July, 1627, carrying forty men and twenty boys. VAN PEERE wanted to get a few women, but none would go, probably on account of the evil reports of cannibalism and other horrible things on the Wild Coast. Fort Nassau was built, and a regular trading station established but it is not probable that any cultivation was opened, except perhaps a provision ground. As the trade only concerned the mercantile house of VAN PEERE, very little is known of it, but it may be stated with certainty that the post gave a profit, otherwise it would have been abandoned. It was strong enough to successfully defend

itself against a small English Privateer during the war, while the Commandeur was able to re-capture Kyk-over-al from the enemy, although Commodore CRYNSEN took the credit of the transaction.

As it will be necessary to continually refer to the different corporations which formed the political system of the United Provinces, as well as those which governed the Chartered West India Company, a short account of these bodies is requisite.

The Seven Provinces of the United Netherlands formed a Republic, the supreme senate being called the States General. This Council was composed of a Deputy from each province, the President being a Prince of the house of Orange, called the Stadtholder. Each province had its own council, which went under the name of the States of Holland or Zeeland as the case might be, while every city was governed by a Burgher Council, with power to make laws and administer them quite independent from the others. To their High Mightinesses the States General belonged the privileges of making war or peace, receiving and despatching ambassadors, and keeping up frontier towns and forts, for which purposes they were entitled to levy taxes. Important questions were not settled in this supreme council by majority of votes, but every province was bound to give consent, for which purpose each Deputy returned to his "States" and laid the matter before the representatives of the different cities, who were also obliged to obtain the consent of their constituents. Thus, everything of importance was finally decided by the Burghers or citizens, and the government was an example of perfect representation. Its great fault was the necessary delay in obtaining the consent of so many different corporations, which often caused much trouble when immediate action was imperative. Adjoined to the States General was a Council of State, composed of twelve representatives, who deliberated on all

matters to be brought before the supreme senate, and also discussed financial affairs.

The West India Company was formed on the model of the State, the supreme control being vested at first in a council called "The Nineteen" from its number of representatives of the shareholders. When the Company was reorganised in 1674 the number was changed and the supreme directorate became known as "The Ten." This was composed of representatives from the Directorate of the provinces called "Chambers" who were elected by the shareholders. As in the "States" so in the "Chambers," there was plenty of room for differences of opinion and consequent delay.

The character of the Hollander is quaintly pictured in an old school-book, written at the end of the seventeenth century, as follows :—

"The natives of this Country are reckoned none of the Politest sort of People either in thought or behaviour, especially the latter, in which they so little endeavour to follow the various modes and nice Punctilios of Ceremony in Use among their neighbours the French, that they chuse rather to run to the other extream. The Chief Quality of this People (besides the singular neatness of their Houses) is that wonderful Genius to a laudable Industry, where-with they seem to be Universally inspir'd ; Persons of all Ages, Sexes and Stations, being some way or other usefully employ'd. So Industrious indeed are the Dutch, both at home and abroad, that Holland may be fitly resembled to a large Bee-Hive whereof the City of Amsterdam we'll reckon the entry ; where the multitude of ships that one sees daily going out and in, doth lively represent the swarm of Bees thronging out and in at the door of the Hive when busie at work in a hot Summer's day. By which industrious Hand, in carrying on several profitable Manufactures at home, and managing a prodigious Trade abroad, they have of late advanc'd themselves to such a height of

Power and Treasure, as to become even terrible to crowned Heads."*

Such being the constitution of the government, and the character of the people who founded these colonies, it would naturally be expected that Essequibo and Berbice would advance very slowly, for while the Dutchman was individually very industrious, his rulers were particularly dilatory, and the West India Company especially so.

* *Geography Anatomiz'd or the Geographical Grammar* by Pat. Gordon.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRADING FACTORIES, 1668—1688.

Desolation of Essequibo and Pomeroon in 1668—The Chamber of Zeeland sends Hendrik Rol to look after the interests of the West India Company—Settlements handed over to the Zeeland Chamber—Terms of the agreement—Rol appointed Commandeur—His duties—His character—Berbice under the Van Peeres—Arrival of Van Berkel—His visits to Kyk-over-al—War and its effects on the settlements—The West India Company in difficulties—Charter to new Company—Its “Articled Letter”—Company wants to get control of Berbice—Agreement with Van Peere—Hendrik Rol dies and is succeeded by Jacob Harz—Harz dismissed and Abraham Beekman appointed—Instructions and Commission of Beekman—His character—His projects too advanced for the Directors—New colony in the Pomeroon—Disputes between Beekman and the Commandeur of Pomeroon—Ordinance for regulating the trade in Indian slaves—Beekman’s letter to the Directors—Arrival of a Predicant—Beekman’s extravagance—His relations with the Commandeur of Berbice—Profit by the Company from Essequibo.

AT the end of the year 1668, Essequibo and Pomeroon were virtually ruined and almost deserted, the only remains of the two settlements being the small garrison left by Commodore CRYNSEN at Kyk-over-al the year before. The energy and perseverance of the founders of the Pomeroon colony had been entirely wasted, and now the few planters had abandoned the place in despair, hoping for better luck in the more prosperous settlement of Surinam. With them went Commandeur SAEL, while BAERLAND remained a little longer at Kyk-over-al, but even he forsook his post towards the end of 1668. The settlement was

nominally in possession of the States of Zeeland, but as the mother country had plenty of work at home, nothing could be done for such a paltry place as Essequibo. The small garrison however, stayed on, and did the best they could in the absence of supplies, without a proper head, half-starved, and probably suffering from disease. By the pillage of the English they were left without "Indian trade," and, unless the slaves managed to escape into the bush before the arrival of the English, they could not have had any labourers to cultivate the cassava field at Cartabo. A little help was probably derived from Berbice, but as the rations at Fort Nassau were calculated to last until the arrival of the next vessel, not much could be spared. Sometimes a friendly Indian would bring some game, or the soldiers catch a few fish, but these supplies were naturally very precarious.

Meanwhile, some of the Directors of the Chamber of Zeeland had their attention directed to Essequibo, and set about considering what should be done. The "States" did not care for the place, so there was no difficulty in sending a small vessel to reopen the trade. With her went HENDRIK ROL, a good skipper and trader, commissioned to see what could be done to restore Kyk-over-al to its position as a Trading Factory. Being a man of considerable ability, and well provided with suitable merchandise, he was heartily welcomed by the Indians and disposed of his wares at a good profit. Kyk-over-al was again the scene of some commotion, as the Indians, hearing of the arrival, came from the interior loaded with cotton, tobacco, anatto, balsam copaiba, &c., which they readily exchanged for articles of trifling value. On the return of the vessel the Directors of the "Chamber" were so well pleased that they entered into negotiations with the "States" for the surrender of the settlement. The matter was decided on the 11th of April 1670, when a Contract was signed by which the "States" agreed to deliver up to the "Chamber," the settlement and

fort with all its guns and ammunition, together with all the stores that might be found there, allowing the "Chamber" to appoint a Commandeur, and agreeing to keep ten soldiers at fort Kyk-over-al. Nothing would be charged to the "Chamber" unless the garrison should have been supplied with provisions (from Surinam) since the departure of Captain BAERLAND; if such had been the case, the amount should not exceed six stivers per day for each man. The consideration on the part of the Company was to be the importation into Surinam of five hundred slaves annually, who were to be publicly sold at eighteen months credit, the Governor of that colony being entitled to choose six from this number at the rate of 25 Flemish pounds* each. The colony of Essequibo would in future be open to every citizen of Zeeland, either for trade or settlement, on payment of tonnage dues to the Company, the monopoly of the anatto trade being however reserved.†

The reason why the above stipulation was made was because Surinam was then in possession of the States of Zeeland and the settlers much in want of slaves. As the Company held a monopoly of the slave trade, nothing could be done without its help, no colony in the West Indies being even able to exist without the indispensable negro. The contract was so faithfully carried out during the next century that Surinam was always well supplied, while Essequibo and Demerara were ignored.

The agreement having been settled, HENDRIK ROL was appointed Commandeur at Kyk-over-al. With the vessel that carried his Commission, went a Secretary and six other servants of the Company, to help him in carrying on the Indian trade. His salary was thirty guilders (\$12) per month with rations, for which small remuneration he had many arduous duties to perform. As Commandeur,

* Flemish pound was equal to ten shillings English.

† Hartsinck's *Beschryving van Guiana*.

he was Governor of the little settlement, Captain over the few soldiers, store-keeper, and last, but not least, Indian trader. Up the rivers and creeks, and through the various foot-paths, which then intersected the country in every direction, he led a band of Indian slaves, each carrying a load of merchandise, bringing back on his return the more bulky result of a toilsome journey. The slaves were generally people of inland tribes who had been captured by roving bands of Caribs and brought to the fort for sale. It was of the utmost importance that amity should be encouraged, and even enforced, in the neighbourhood of Kyk-over-al, as trade could not consist with native quarrels, and therefore none of the slaves belonged to any of the friendly tribes. The vicinity of the fort and the paths for traffic, were therefore centres round which the weaker Arawacks congregated, as the Caribs hardly dared to provoke their friend the Commandeur. Indian villages were then scattered all along the banks of the rivers, not as at present, only in the interior, but from the fort downwards as well. There was even a tendency to an increase of the native population in the lower districts, from the encouragement given to the production of the various articles which then formed the only exports of the settlement.

By his energy and tact, HENDRIK ROL succeeded in making a profit, which gave great satisfaction to the Directors. He seems to have been a good hand at a bargain, and probably went very near to what we should call cheating, now-a-days. In 1672 an assistant or clerk was sent out, to act in his absence on trading journeys, and Rol's salary was raised to fifty guilders. There does not appear to have been any private planters in Essequibo at the commencement of his administration, but with the improved prospects two or three Zeelanders came to Essequibo and commenced clearing land. Rol proposed that estates should be cultivated on behalf of the Company, for which purpose

African slaves would be necessary, and the Directors, being in good humour, sent him two cargoes. On their arrival, land was cleared and the Company's plantations were commenced, being principally laid out for cane cultivation. The garrison was strengthened, and altogether the prospects of the settlement began to brighten considerably. It may be presumed that the very few planters were allowed to settle wherever they chose,—the country was before them and there was no difficulty as to land grants or taxes.

Meanwhile, in Berbice the old system still prevailed. Once a year, a trading vessel was sent out by the VAN PEERES with the stores and negotiæ for the succeeding twelve months. The skipper chose and stowed his cargo, took it to Berbice, and on his arrival assumed command of the settlement. Having filled the store with provisions and "Indian trade" he let his predecessor go home with the result of last year's trading, while he remained behind to make as much profit as possible during his own term. As in Essequibo, the Commandeur did his best by inland journeys and otherwise, to collect a cargo to carry home on the return of the vessel. Thus the whole responsibility for the result of a year's trading lay on the shoulders of one man, and gave great scope for energy and economy, or even meanness.

However this curious system might encourage thrift, it certainly could not consist with the progress of a settlement. There were no losses, but at the same time there could be nothing like that advancement which is naturally expected in a colony. The fort was nothing but a block-house, surrounded by palisading, and as every Commandeur wanted to realise as much as possible during his term of office, no one cared to spend anything upon it. Everything was done on the meanest scale, the only object being present gain. There were two or three little plantations and provision grounds, cultivated by Indian slaves because

these were cheaper than Africans, but the produce shipped was of very little importance. Under these circumstances, although the settlement had existed for upwards of forty years, it was hardly in a better position than at the commencement.

In October 1670, the ship *Nassau*, Captain CORNELIS MARINUS, sailed from Vlissengen for Berbice, having on board a gentleman who was destined to develop the resources of that settlement to some considerable extent. His name was ADRIAN VAN BEKKEL and his position that of a factor for the house of VAN PEERE. Who was Commandeur on his arrival, does not appear, but MARINUS was, according to custom, to act in that capacity for the succeeding year. Being entirely free from any of the responsibilities of government, VAN BEKKEL put all his energies into the Indian trade. Not content with making short journeys on the regular tracks, he extended his excursions far into the interior, carrying good quantities of negotiable articles and bringing back in return whatever was worth shipping to the Netherlands. VAN BEKKEL and HENDRIK ROL must have been well acquainted with the interior of this colony, but what is most surprising in their journeys is the fact that they were carried out at such little expense, and that the trading operations gave a profit. On four different occasions VAN BEKKEL visited Kyk-over-al, where he was received in a very friendly manner by ROL. A slight dispute took place between the energetic factor and the Commandeur of Essequebo, as to the right claimed by Berbice to trade in the Demerara River, which was amicably settled by an agreement that the Abary Creek should be the boundary between the two colonies, which arrangement has remained without question to the present day.

On one of his visits to ROL in 1672, VAN BEKKEL was accompanied by the Predicant of Berbice, three other Europeans and ten Indians. The party crossed overland

from the upper Berbice to the Demerara river, probably by the Indian path which led from Plantation Savonette to the Loo, and on arriving at the Demerara, embarked in a tent boat, came down the river and proceeded to Kyk-over-al. The voyage was a very pleasant one, VAN BERKEL being struck with admiration at the breadth of the river Essequibo and its numerous islands. With the flood tide, it took them twelve hours to reach the fort. On their arrival they found everybody looking out to see who was coming, as a tent-boat was very rare in those waters. Arrived at the landing they were met and welcomed by the Commandeur, who came out in full dress, sword in hand, and saluted them in a most courteous manner. A guard of honour consisting of a double line of soldiers, formed an avenue, through which the party passed into the fort, being saluted as they entered by a volley of musketry. Escorted by ROL, VAN BERKEL and his friends were led upstairs, where they were met on the landing by the Secretary, while at the same time three cannons were fired as a second salute. So grand was this reception that VAN BERKEL said the party thought themselves European Kings. Proceeding to the chamber of the Commandeur, the factor wanted to go into business at once, but ROL told him not to hurry himself for a day or two; there was plenty of time, and he must not think of business until he had well rested after his arduous journey. His European followers remained as guests of the soldiers, while himself and the Predicant were invited to make themselves at home. The Commandeur at once sent to the store for a flask of gin, and at the same time a messenger arrived from the principal private planter in the colony, who had heard of the coming of the visitors, bringing a large jar of wine. With these they made themselves sociable until dinner was ready, drinking to their heart's content. In the evening they sat down to a grand banquet of five courses, and after thoroughly enjoying themselves went to

sleep full, and did not awake until nine o'clock the following morning.

After giving his Indians permission to visit their friends for eight days, VAN BERKEL proceeded to have a look round the island, but this did not take him long, as it was only a stone's-throw across. The fort was square; on the lower floor was a magazine and store for heavy goods, while above there were three rooms, one for the Commandeur, the second for the Secretary, which was also used for light stores, and the third for the soldiers. The island was rocky, and round the fort they went hunting, but found nothing, the Commandeur stating that at rare intervals they caught some animal that had swam from the mainland. In the afternoon a "Christian" (white servant) brought an invitation from HEEB DE GRAAF, the donor of the jar of wine, for the Commandeur and his guests to visit him next day, when he promised that a good dinner should be provided.

This invitation having been accepted, they set off in a corial next morning, arriving at the plantation in about an hour. VAN BERKEL stated that everything here was in first rate order, the grounds having the appearance of a European estate. Their reception was very cordial, the dinner being perfect, consisting of five different kinds of roast meat, including deer, fowl, duck, turkey and pigeons, besides made dishes of labba and water-hog. The drinks were rum, wine and brandy, with which they kept themselves merry until the evening when they returned to the fort full and jolly (*vol. en zoet*).

There were only three private plantations in Essequibo, that of De Graaf being the largest, having 28 to 30 slaves; the other two had only 12 to 14 each. The planters lived a princely life as far as food and drink were concerned, being better off than the officers at the fort. There was plenty for the votaries of either Bacchus or Venus, but, said VAN BERKEL, he who was fond of society need not go there, as

the warm climate and few inhabitants did not admit of so many opportunities for sociability as Europe, while besides these the sun was very oppressive and many things were wanting to make life agreeable.

On the fourth day, when Rol thought his visitor had rested sufficiently, they proceeded to business. Having discussed the dispute as to trading in the Demerara river, it was amicably settled by fixing the Abary as a boundary, and then came the bargaining for the load of goods which VAN BERKEL had brought. The factor being in his element, now opened the packages and finally arranged an exchange for a quantity of balsam copaiba.*

Berbice was now improving, there being five sugar plantations in 1674, while trading posts had been established in the Canje creek and several other out-lying districts. In 1672, there had been disputes with the Caribs, and the Canje post was plundered and burnt, but being pursued by a few soldiers from Fort Nassau, the Indians retired up the river, leaving the posts and settlement alone. On account of difficulties connected with the Indian slave trade, treaties were made in Berbice, as in Essequibo, declaring the neighbouring tribes to be absolutely free. Before this was done, Indians sometimes sold their relations or neighbours for spirits or other coveted articles.

In March 1672, England joined France in declaring war against the Netherlands, one of the pretexts being the refusal of the Dutch to allow the English settlers to remove from Surinam, with all their goods and effects, in accordance with the Articles of Capitulation. An attack on Essequibo was feared, and some of the Barbadians even offered to capture it at their own expense if permitted by the Governor. As might be expected, the Commandeurs of Kyk-over-al and Fort Nassau were in a state of consternation.

* *Amerikaansche Voyagiën, Behehzende eene reis na Rio de Berblce, door Adriaan van Berkel, Amsterdam, 1695.*

The colonies of all nations in the West Indies were now in a most critical position, England and France being pitted against Holland and Spain. Fillibusters, buccaneers, pirates and privateers, had a glorious time, but fortunately for Essequibo and Berbice, they were not worth plundering. The Dutch were not behind-hand in carrying fire and sword among the English and French colonies, which they succeeded in annoying to a very great extent. Attempts were made by some of the late English settlers in Surinam to induce the authorities of Barbados to send an expedition to recapture that colony. Captain PETER WROTH reported Surinam as being very weak, and proposed that eight hundred men should be sent to capture it, provided with three months victuals, small arms and ammunition. If the king would supply the necessary shipping, &c., he would himself raise men inured to the climate and acquainted with the place, who would expect the share of plunder usually allowed to adventurers without pay. He had paid a visit in May 1673 in the *Little Kit* and surprized seven Dutch and English inhabitants of Surinam while turtling, from whom he had learnt some particulars of the state of that Colony. He had then sailed to Essequibo where he was ambuscaded and lost some men ; leaving which he had proceeded to the Caribs in the river Amacura and victualled.*

Captain WROTH seems to have been well acquainted with the Caribs of Amacura, who were probably the same that helped Scott to capture the Pomeroon and Kyk-over-al. There was, at that time, a trade for Indian slaves at the mouth of the Orinoco, to which small English vessels went at intervals for the purpose of procuring these unfortunates to sell in the West Indian Islands. The representations of WROTH had no effect, probably because there was so much to be done elsewhere.

* Calendar of State Papers : America and the West Indies 1669—74

The hampering of trade by the war was much felt in Berbice. The vessel that usually brought the annual supplies, the *Eendragt*, being engaged as a privateer, did not arrive in 1673, and consequently the soldiers at Fort Nassau were put on reduced rations. This they did not like, and under the leadership of one DIRK ROSENCRANZ a conspiracy was organised. The Commandeur was locked up, while the malcontents took possession and kept control of the settlement, until a vessel arrived the following year with a new Commandeur.

By the mediation of Sweden peace was arranged on the 19th of February 1674, the articles granting all the claims of the English colonists in Surinam. The trade to Essequibo and Berbice was again open, and on the 16th of July following the ship *Tholen* arrived at Middelburg with produce and goods valued at four thousand Flemish pounds, (£2,000), probably the result of two years trading and cultivation. Even allowing for the difference in value of money as compared with the same sum now-a-days, this seems very little, but it at least shows that something was being done.

By this time the West India Company had come to a crisis. Being hopelessly involved, nothing was left but to wind it up and start afresh. It had been insolvent for some years past, and since the loss of Brazil had paid no dividends. The circumstances under which it had been established no longer existed, since peace with Spain had been secured. Ostensibly a mercantile Company, with the monopoly of the slave trade as far as Holland was concerned, it was really little better than a gigantic association for privateering and pillaging the Spanish settlements. The late wars had resulted in serious losses, several of its vessels having been captured, while out of thirty six traders to the West Indies fourteen had failed to pay expenses. Its debts amounted to six million guilders, and these were taken over by a new Company, which agreed to compound

with the creditors by paying thirty per cent, while the old shareholders were entitled to new shares at the rate of fifteen per cent. of their capital. Its charter was granted by the States General on the 20th of September 1674 under the same name, but with limited privileges. The monopoly now extended only to the West Coast of Africa, including of course the slave trade, and the little settlement in Essequibo, all other Dutch possessions in the West Indies being open to all ports of the Netherlands. With a capital of only 634,000 guilders (\$252,000) its operations were much contracted as compared with the old Company, where the amount was eighteen millions. The old governing Council of Nineteen was replaced by "The Ten," which consisted of four Directors from Amsterdam, two from Zeeland, and one each from the Maas, South Holland and North Holland, the president being appointed by the States General. The meetings were to be held for six years at Amsterdam and then two years at Middelburg, the constitutions of the different Chambers remaining as before.

Under the system of independent Chambers it was possible for one of them to act for its own benefit without regard to the interests of others. Thus it happened that the Chamber of Zeeland took upon itself the entire control of the trade to Essequibo, so that it became an exclusive monopoly, not even Amsterdam being allowed to have any part therein. This was a matter of trifling importance at this early period, but later it became a great burden and obstruction to the colony. A late writer* states that the Company possessed too many interests to be able to concentrate its attention on Essequibo, and besides, it was under the control of several Chambers, each of them having discordant members. It followed therefore, that the Resolutions and

*Brieven over het Bestuur der Colonien Essequibo en Demerary tusschen Aristodemus en Sincerus : Amsterdam 1786-8,

Orders took long periods before they were carried out, during which the colony stood in need of prompt orders and immediate action. The heads of the Company knew nothing of the state of affairs in the colony and even forgot their own Resolutions.

Having received the charter, the new West India Company formulated a code of laws called the Articled Letter,* which was confirmed by the States General on the 12th of April 1675. This is interesting as being the code under which the Commandeurs governed at Kyk-over-al, and also very curious from the light it throws on the way soldiers and sailors were treated at this period. The Dutch were almost proverbial for cruelty, and it certainly seems as if there was plenty of justification for such a stigma in the Articled Letter. It would hardly be expected that such a cruel infliction as keel-hauling could ever have been sanctioned by law, but it is here as a punishment for cutting and wounding. Perhaps the most horribly repulsive to our ideas is the article providing that a murderer was to be fastened alive to the corpse and thrown overboard. The shrewdness of the Dutchman is conspicuous throughout, but the most curious provisions are those that refer to the risk or chance which a man took in the vessel. His wages and prize money depended on the ship getting safe home ; if she was lost or captured by the enemy he had no claim on the Company, but if in a fight he stuck to her until she sunk or blew up, his friends might recover the amount due. When it is considered that most of the soldiers and sailors were mercenaries, and often deserved that name in its worst sense, it will be understood why so many of the punishments are connected with the stoppage of wages.

The original, with its form of oath for soldiers and sailors and extract from the minutes of the States General, is too

* *Articul-Brief van de Geoctroyeerde West Indische Compagnie, S'Gravenhage, 1675.*

long to be inserted in full, but the following abstract contains a free translation of the substance of the Articled Letter:—

1. All who enter the service of the Company, whatever their position, will be bound to obey their superior officers, both on land and water, as well as all Orders and Instructions of the Company.

2. To prevent disorder and administer justice, there shall be on every vessel a Ship's Council, which shall adjudicate over all civil and light offences, but capital offences and serious crimes shall be referred, when at sea, to the Admiral and his Council, or on shore to the highest authority there; the delinquents being arrested and properly secured until they can be delivered to the nearest authority.

3. Whoever shall discover and divulge any conspiracy or intention to mutiny, either on land or water, should he himself be one of the offenders, shall be pardoned, and besides that receive a reward of twenty "pieces of eight," (dollars) but if on the contrary he be not concerned in the matter, he shall be presented with fifty "pieces of eight," and in addition be advanced to the first vacant post suited to his capacity.

4. No one shall use the name of the Lord vainly, or curses, oaths, blasphemy or mockery, on pain of a fine of ten stivers for each offence, and arbitrary correction according to circumstances.

5. If any one is absent from morning and evening prayers without sufficient cause, or does not conduct himself reverently when present, he shall forfeit ten stivers in favour of the Provost, or in the absence of such officer, to the poor.

6. All Naval and Military Officers, as well as soldiers and sailors, shall be bound to be ready and report themselves at once on the roll of the drum, and be prepared to embark in the boats or do any other thing required, without hesitation, on pain of losing a month's wages, no excuse whatever being permitted.

7. No person shall be allowed to have his sea chest of any other size or shape than that ordered by the Company, on pain of its being seized and confiscated, together with the contents.

8. On returning from a voyage no person shall be allowed on board the vessel except only the pilot, and until the Directors have visited the ship and given their permission, nothing shall be removed or even opened, on pain of the loss of a month's wages, the Officers being bound to see this enforced and held responsible.

9. All servants of the Company shall be engaged for four years, and if anyone deserts before the expiration of his term he shall lose all his wages and prize money.

10. The Company on their part shall not be bound to keep their ser-

vants for the whole term, but if they think proper, may discharge them at any time, without being required to give any reason whatever.

11. When the term has expired no servant shall be allowed to leave without permission.

12. When a vessel is cruising off the coast of Africa no one shall leave his ship without permission, on pain of losing all his wages and prize money.

13. Whoever shall desert to the enemy shall be treated as a perjurer, and if he ever falls into the hands of the Company shall be executed.

14. If any one shall run away after receiving an advance of one or two months wages, he shall be whipped and bound to restore double the amount.

15. The wages and prize money of those found guilty of bad conduct shall be forfeited.

16. Wages commence to be credited on leaving the last beacon, and cease when the servant is dismissed ; no one shall be entitled to demand an advance during the voyage on pain of whipping, as they are payable only when the vessel returns to the Netherlands, and after the account is made out from the ship's books. If any person, by special permission should receive any portion of his wages, he shall be charged assurance at the rate of ten per cent for the South Sea, and six per cent for other places.

17. In case of death, when the amount at credit of the deceased has been paid to his relations, the Company will not be responsible should better claims be made, but they may order the amount to be refunded. To prevent disputes the servant may declare before his departure what person shall be entitled to his property in case of death.

18. All persons engaged on the Company's vessels will have a lien on the ship as well as the cargo, but if the ship is lost the servants will lose all their claims on the Company ; if anything is saved from the wreck they will be entitled to a claim on the salvage, if the vessel is destroyed in an action with the enemy, wages will be paid, but if it is captured the servants will lose everything.

19. When a person leaves his vessel to join another that is bound on a longer voyage, he will have the option of taking his risk with either vessel, but when going home he shall have no choice.

20. If on arriving at his destination, he should enter a vessel trading on the coast, he shall have his choice of risk.

21. At the expiration of his engagement, a servant may forward an order for his pay, and in such a case may take his risk on the vessel carrying the order or on his own ship.

22. The salaries of the Military and Naval officers and soldiers will have no risk beyond the voyage outwards or home, as also the risk of

sailors terminates if they should be posted ashore ; those who serve in small vessels will have no risk unless they are sent on long voyages. ;

23. As often as a servant removes from a vessel to shore or aboard again, his account shall be made out, with his risk properly entered, so that he may be paid according to this statement in the absence of the ship's books.

24. On the sounding of the trumpet and rolling of the drum every one shall be at his post at once, properly armed and equipped, and ready to defend the vessel, or attack the enemy, on pain of whipping.

25. The surgeon will be bound to give proper care and attention to the wounded. If any of the Company's servants receive injuries or mutilation in the service, they shall receive compensation as follows :—Loss of a right arm £800, left arm £500, one leg £450, both legs £800, one eye £300, both eyes £900, left hand £400, right hand £600, and both hands £1000 ; for any other losses or injuries by which his health is impaired, he shall receive what the surgeon and officers consider proper under the circumstances.

26. If a prize should be taken, a tenth part of the value of the cargo shall be divided among the Company's servants, after deducting the cost of repairs to the vessels concerned in the capture.

27. No division of goods belonging to a prize shall be made at sea.

28. Prizes shall be divided among all the vessels of a fleet, the conquering ship being entitled to plunder of personal effects such as wearing apparel, but not to merchandise, gold or jewellery.

29. Whoever shall take an Admiral's flag, or first mount a fortress, shall be entitled to fifty pieces of eight, and if he should be killed the amount shall be paid to his heirs.

30. When one servant does duty for another he shall be entitled to receive half that officer's salary as well as his own.

31. Military Officers and soldiers however, shall only receive one full pay in such cases.

32. No one shall be entitled to claim an increase of salary during the term of his engagement, not even for extra services.

33. Extra payments may however be made at the discretion of the Company.

34. If any servant should receive a present of horses, arms, &c., it shall be handed over to the Company, when the Directors will pay him its value.

35. Every one shall be bound to do his best to promote the safety of the vessels and goods, on sea as well as on land, on pain, in case of negligence, of losing a month's wages.

36. None of the Company's servants, whatever his position, will be allowed to carry on any private trade or business, or have any interest in the cargo, on pain of losing a month's wages and confiscation of the goods.

37. No one will be allowed to sell or exchange his clothes for drink or anything else, on pain of arbitrary correction.

38. No one shall sell his interest in his wages, on pain of the sale being cancelled, the buyer losing all redress.

39. Every person must be satisfied with his rations ; he will not be permitted to grumble at them, to throw them overboard, or to waste or sell them, on pain of incarceration for fourteen days on bread and water.

40. Every one must keep his musket and other weapons in order, so as to be ready in time of need, on pain of losing a month's wages ; Officers are required to examine the arms once a fortnight.

41. Neither carpenters, stevedores, woodcutters, cooks, surgeons, or any other persons, will be allowed to illuse or misplace their tools, on pain of whipping before the mast.

42. The surgeons will be bound to do their best to cure the sick and wounded, without expecting anything beyond their wages, except in cases on land or outside the vessels, and they shall see that no nuisances are committed, and look after the cleanliness of the ship.

43. Wills and codicils must be written by the captain, supercargo, or clerk, witnessed by two persons, signed by the testator and the others, and properly registered in a book.

44. Immediately after a death, an inventory of the effects must be made, the goods sold before the mast, and the amount received credited to the account of the deceased, which shall be paid, with the balance of his salary to the heirs.

45. If any one shall leave directions that his property be preserved and delivered to his widow or other heirs, it shall be left undisturbed and given over to the proper persons.

46. No person shall be allowed to have or use cards or dice, on pain of a fine of twenty stivers, and everything which shall have been won by play shall be restored to the losers.

47. Any person found drinking, disputing, cursing, trying to injure another, or creating a disturbance, shall be punished according to circumstances ; those who fight or tear each other's hair, shall be incarcerated in irons for three days on bread and water ; whoever shall draw a knife with intent to stab another shall be fastened by the knife through his hand to the mast, and left to free himself ; whoever shall wound another shall be keel-hauled and lose a month's wages.

48. If any one shall murder another, he shall be tied to the corpse, and with it thrown overboard, and all his wages and prize money shall be forfeited.

49. To prevent the risk of fire, no one shall be allowed to smoke tobacco except in the place provided, no light shall be allowed in the hold, store-room, or powder magazine, and no one shall have in his possession any tinder-boxes or candles, either by day or night, otherwise than is allowed for his duties, on pain of arbitrary correction.

50. No one shall be allowed to leave his ship without permission, on pain of fourteen days incarceration in irons on bread and water, and forfeiture of two months wages.

51. Sentries must not allow any strangers to come on board the vessels without permission of the authorities, either by day or night, nor allow the people on board to crowd together in a mob or make a plot, but keep every man to his post, and compel those not belonging to the watch to retire to their places, on pain of arbitrary correction.

52. No one shall be dipped in crossing the Line, on pain of every person concerned losing a month's wages, but instead, every novice must pay a flask of wine to each of the others.

53. Every one shall be bound to deliver to the Directors, or their superior officers, on returning from a voyage, all journals, charts, documents, memoranda of roads, rivers, harbours, capes, observations and courses, together with all the appendages of the seafaring on the voyage, whether asked for or not, on pain of losing three months' wages, and other punishment according to circumstances.

54. No one shall be allowed to write particulars concerning the affairs of the Company, or information as to its trade, commerce, wars, or the conduct of any of its servants, to any but the Directors or the Chambers, on pain of losing three months' wages.

55. To the end that the last article be properly observed, it is forbidden to carry private letters, all persons being required to deliver them to the nearest authority, for enclosure with the correspondence of the Company.

56. All private letters will be opened, read and certified, before delivery, or they may be detained if the directors think proper; the same being done with those going from the Netherlands as when coming from abroad.

57. No one shall be allowed to obstruct the Provost in carrying out his orders, but every person shall be bound to assist him in every possible way; any person acting to the contrary, hindering in any way, or assisting prisoners with meat or drink, or anything else, shall lose four months' wages, and above that receive corporeal punishment,

58. The Provost shall receive during the incarceration of each prisoner, daily, for officers ten stivers, and soldiers and sailors six stivers, during which time the prisoners shall receive no wages, the particulars being placed in their accounts.

59. Military officers and soldiers, when on board ship, will be subject to the authorities of the vessel, who shall however act with the advice of the officers.

60. When a person shall have received an increase of salary for acting for another, or for any particular work, this shall cease as soon as the work is finished.

61. Soldiers on board ship will be bound to help in working the vessel, without taking exception, and the military officers must not interfere to prevent this, but on their part help the service by training the sailors in gun exercises.

62. All military officers and soldiers, as well as all other servants of the Company, will be bound, for their own assurance and safety, as well as for the benefit of the Company, to obey their superiors when ordered to labour in erecting and repairing forts, batteries, mines, trenches and other defensive works, without expecting any extra payment, but only rations during the time of carrying on the work, unless on the recommendation of the Commander some reward should be given.

63. Muskets will be supplied to each servant, and charged to his account; after the expiration of his service they shall be returned, and half the amount credited to him, the commissary and supercargo being charged to see that this is carried out.

64. All persons, high or low, are charged not to ill-treat the native inhabitants of the countries they visit, or to injure them in any way in their persons, goods, women or children, but to regulate themselves by this Articled Letter and the Instructions and Orders of the Directors, and the commands of their superiors, on pain of a fine or corporeal punishment.

65. Whenever the Company thinks it advisable the servants may be ordered to provide rations at their own cost, and every one shall be bound to do this willingly and without complaint.

66. To all the above Articles every person shall be bound by oath, those who may be employed at any time after the first mustering being bound to take the same oath as the others.

The new Company being now established, the Directors wanted to get possession of Berbice. The last concession, which had been granted in 1640, to ABRAHAM VAN PERE *

* Spelt Pere, Peres, or Peere indifferently, probably the Portuguese or Spanish Perez.

and ABRAHAM VAN RHEE, had necessarily lapsed when the old Company was wound up. When VAN PEEB asked for what was virtually a renewal of the lease, he received an absolute refusal from the Directors. The Patroon of Berbice declined to submit to this decision, and having considerable influence with the Company he managed to get it rescinded. Then came a lot of disputes as to the terms, which lasted from 1675, to September the 14th, 1678, when the following agreement was signed by the Ten :—

“ Articles and Conditions under which the Lords Committee of Directors from the respective Chambers of the General Chartered West India Company of the United Netherlands, under the authority of the High Mighty Lords States General of the same territories, have given over as a fief, the colony situated on the river named Berbice, on the great coast of America, in latitude six degrees north of the Equinoctial line, to the Heer ABRAHAM VAN PEEB.

“ The aforesaid Colony with all its belongings on the surface, minerals, forests, rivers, fountains, and whatever else shall be found there, shall be the property of the aforesaid Heer VAN PEEB, his heirs and successors, during the period of the Charter of the said Company until the year 1700 inclusive, to be held of the same Company as a continual hereditary fief, with all its royalties and appurtenances, high, middle and low jurisdiction, tithes, fisheries and water privileges, on payment, as often as the fief shall be transferred to another person, of a manorial fee (*verheergewaaden*) of forty Flemish pounds, which tax, being the right of the aforesaid General Company, shall be paid to the Chamber of Zeeland at Middleburg.

“ The aforementioned Heer VAN PEEB, his heirs and successors, shall, under the title of Patroons of the aforesaid Colony, conduct and execute everything for the preservation of the Colony, including the maintenance of good order, police and justice, according to the laws and customs of these territories; they shall also take particular care that the Reformed Christian Religion be professed and taught in the District of the aforesaid Colony. To this necessary end a qualified pastor and shepherd shall be appointed, and before he goes there, he shall be presented before one of the respective Colleges in Holland, Zeeland, Gronigen, Ommelanden or elsewhere, that he may be qualified to perform the duties of a Predicant, and whatever belongs to that profession, in conformity with the rules of the Church.

"The said VAN PERE will be permitted, in the name and by the authority of their High Mightinesses and the Company, to make binding Contracts and Alliances with the natives of the country, as well as to erect fortresses and other works for protection and defense.

"Whenever, and as often as it happens that the said VAN PERE, his heirs and successors, shall despatch vessels to the aforesaid Colony, they shall be bound to give notice to the Company, and request for each vessel a Commission, or Wood and Salt Letter, which shall be granted, they being bound to give security not to sail to any place that is put in the First Class, these being reserved exclusively and privately to the Company, all other places however being conceded.

"For the redemption of the five guilders per last, which the Company is entitled to demand and exact on all vessels sailing to the aforesaid Colony, both inwards and outwards, together with the vendue tax, and all other taxes and recognitions to which the Company may have pretensions from the time of granting these liens, they hereby concede to the said VAN PERE, his heirs and successors, the right to trade according to their pleasure, they being bound to pay for each vessel, great or small, without distinction or difference, as a tax to and on behalf of the aforesaid Company, the sum of five hundred and seventy-five Carolus guilders for each vessel, and no more.

"The payment of the aforesaid sum shall be made in the following manner, namely, on payment of two hundred guilders besides the cost of the aforesaid Commission or Wood and Salt Letter, the aforesaid VAN PERE, his heirs and successors, will be allowed to clear the vessel (which may be their own or hired), which will then be permitted to leave, and the balance of three hundred and seventy-five guilders, shall be paid as soon as the beforementioned vessel shall arrive back in these territories and before she is unladen. The aforesaid VAN PERE, his heirs and successors, shall not be allowed to load any goods or merchandise in the ships for this Colony, without having received from the above Company, at this Chamber, the proper Permits, wherein shall be a specific designation of all the goods and merchandise; the same to be made on the return voyage, the vessel not being allowed to commence unloading before receiving special Permits of the Company, containing the designation as before.

"If at any time the Colony should require any negroes or black slaves, in such a case, the Company being notified, shall supply the same at such reasonable prices as may be agreed upon.

"It being well understood that in such cases, the said VAN PERE, his heirs and successors, and his people are bound to declare that they will

not transport the aforesaid negroes or black slaves to any other place, but employ them only in the said Colony." *

ABRAHAM VAN PERE having ignored the rights of his partner, who had died, the widow of VAN RHEE applied to the States General for redress. She had married CORNELIS DEMETRIJS, a Predicant of Middleburg, and joined her second husband in petitioning for her right to a fourth share of Berbice as heiress of VAN RHEE. The matter was decided in her favour on the 24th of January, 1681, and Berbice became the Lordship in fee of the two Patroons, VAN PERE and DEMETRIJS.

Meanwhile, HENDRIK ROL died at Kyk-over-al on the 31st of March, 1676, and was provisionally succeeded by JACOB HARZ, Captain of one of the Company's vessels, which arrived four days after the death of the Commandeur, bringing supplies from Zeeland and eighty-six slaves from Cape de Verde. It does not appear that HARZ was ever confirmed as Commandeur, nor did he give satisfaction to the Chamber of Zeeland. Being a rough sailor, and without business tact or ability, he could not get on with the Indians, and as a natural consequence the amount of balsam copaiba and other trade articles fell off considerably. The produce of the Company's plantations was also reduced, while his arbitrary manner of dealing with his subordinates led to complaints, and finally, in 1678, to his dismissal. The settlement in Essequibo having now become of some little importance, the Ten claimed their right to appoint a Commandeur, to which it does not appear that the Chamber of Zeeland made any objection. Having appointed ABRAHAM BEEKMAN on the 25th of July, 1678, the Ten gave him a proper Commission and full Instructions for his guidance, which latter are particularly interesting, as they enable us to judge of the powers and

* Hartsinck's Beschryving van Guiana.

privileges of the early Commandeurs, as well as of their duties. The following are free translations of the documents :—

“ Instructions for the Honourable ABRAHAM BEEKMAN, Commandeur under their High Mightinesses the States General of the United Netherlands, and the General Chartered West India Company, in their territory at fort Kyk-over-al in Rio Isekepe on the great Wild Coast of America, by which he will have to conform himself in all good faith, to undertake the service of the West India Company, and to further its interests.

1. “ The Commandeur shall, on behalf of the above mentioned, have full authority, not only on the water but also on land, and consequently over the people, fortifications and their preservation, and also over the trade and navigation, which authority every person in the service of the Company, being on land as well as on the ships and boats, shall be bound to recognize and obey in all that he shall order or command.

2. “ But in matters concerning Justice, the Commandeur shall be bound to assume as his Councillors, the Sergeant of the garrison and the Captains of vessels who may be there at the time, and he shall not administer Justice but with the aforesaid Council, and in their presence, it being understood however that cases involving capital punishment, shall always be referred to the high authorities here, for them to judge and award such punishment as may be suited to the case.

3. “ The Commandeur is earnestly recommended to take care that the religion adopted by the public authorities in these territories be maintained as far as possible in its usual form, at the fort and in the ships, and that the inhabitants of the country, as well as their children, are brought through a holy life, into the knowledge of God and the true reformed religion.

4. “ The Commandeur shall keep all his subordinates in good order and under discipline, and exact from them the punctual fulfilment of the contents of the Charter, and punish all those who disobey the Articled Letter, and other orders, instructions and ordinances, made or yet to be made.

5. “ The Commandeur shall not be allowed to trade on his own account directly or indirectly ; he shall strictly enquire into all transactions of the captains and other servants of the Company, and try to prevent their trading as much as possible, punishing the guilty parties with confiscation of the goods sold or yet to be sold, and withholding all salary due, in terms of Article 36 of the aforementioned Articled Letter ; and further to discharge such person from the employ of the Company.

6. "The Commandeur shall, with due diligence, examine what cargoes will probably be required annually, and take in consideration the following four points:—

1. How much there is in hand of everything that is ordered.
2. How it compares with what has been used.
3. What apparent gain there will be.
4. The quantity required to be ordered.

7. "All the reasons and considerations which induce the Commandeur to order commodities, he shall be bound to send in writing to the Directors; in order to assist them in the buying and shipping of goods.

8. "All cargoes and wares, which shall be sent from here from time to time, shall be entered in books to be kept by the Commandeur himself, and a duplicate is to be sent by return ship to this Chamber, every article being entered under a separate heading in the books, showing receipts and deliveries; for example, give axes a separate account, placing on the debit side the number received, and on the credit side count so many axes against so many pounds of anatto, and see how much remains on hand, and further, if gain or loss has been made on the transactions.

9. "The Commandeur is not only ordered to keep proper accounts of all necessaries, ammunition of war, and other things sent out from here, but he must also pay special attention that the commodities, yachts and other boats of the Company, and everything else under his direction, be preserved as much as possible.

10. "The Commandeur shall take care that no one, without his knowledge and consent, take away the commodities, provisions, or other things, of any nature whatsoever, from the Company's warehouse, and punish any offenders severely according to the circumstances of the case.

11. "The Commandeur shall keep a correct daily journal of everything that takes place, and send a copy every year; further by every opportunity, and especially with the return ships, let us know the state of trade in general in the country, and in what condition the goods are, also the state of the warehouses, fortifications, logies, boats, etc.; finally the number of people under him, and in case of those who are dead, send us their wills, accounts and inventories of their goods, also stating at the same time the prices of every article sold.

12. "The Commandeur having arrived on the said Coast, shall receive under proper inventory and receipt from his predecessor, all maps, books and papers, and all commandeurs in case of dismissal, shall be bound to deliver again all such maps and papers as they received from their predecessors, and all maps and papers which may have been added.

13. "The Commandeur shall be bound to take over from his predecessor, under proper Inventory and receipt, all stores, ammunition of war, merchandize, and all other effects which are found in the territory, and he must not fail to send us by the same vessel a copy of the said Inventory and receipt.

14. "The Commandeur on his arrival at Rio Isekepe, shall make all the Company's servants take anew the proper oath, in the name and on behalf of Their High Mightinesses the States General, the Prince of Orange, and the West India Company, with this understanding, that the old commandeur shall keep the command on water and land, until the trade in anatto shall have finished, they being seriously recommended to keep unity and friendship one with another, also, the old commandeur will have to inform his successor exactly of the nature and customs of the natives, especially of the Indians who come and trade there, further the Commander must take care that not the least offence is given to them.

15. "The Commandeur will be bound further to conform himself to such orders as have been given to his predecessors by the Directors of the Company, as far as they do not contradict these.

16. "This having been done, a good watch will have to be kept by day and night, so as to prevent a surprise by Indians or others, no one being allowed to arrive at the fort with a gun, and, for greater security, the Commandeur must see that all the earth-works are kept in good order, as also the palissade fencing.

17. "In the exchange of anatto, letterwood, vanilla, hammocks, etc., care must be taken that no one acts for his own benefit, and it must be noticed that the anatto is properly ripe before it is picked, and that it is preserved in Crab oil.

18. "A list must be sent by every ship containing the names and number of people, such as slaves and others, in the service of the Company.

19. "Care must also be taken that the cassava gardens are cultivated yearly, also that the Turkish beans, pine apples, bananas, and other fruits are gathered, also that in the dry weather fish be prepared as well as other things which can be used in the rainy weather.

This done and passed at the meeting of said directors on 1st September, 1678. Signed by JOHAN RADERMACHER AND ISAACK VAN PERE.

Commission for ABRAHAM BEEKMAN, Commandeur and Governor of the fort Kyk-over-al, situated in the River of Isekepe on the Great Coast of America.

"The Directors of the Chartered West India Company of the Chamber of Zeeland at Middelburg, make known by these presents to all that have been appointed and commissioned in the service of the aforesaid

Company, that in pursuance of the good report made to us of the ability, faithfulness, and experience of the person of ABRAHAM BEEKMAN, we do by these presents, appoint and commission him as Commandeur and Governor over the fort of Kyk-over-al, situated in the River of Isekepe on the Great Wild Coast of America, also to command the sailors and soldiers on that coast who are in the service of the said Company : we therefore order and command all soldiers and other persons who are already in the said fort or shall arrive there, to acknowledge the said BEEKMAN as our appointed Commandeur, and to respect and obey all that he may command on behalf of the Company, for the good of the country or the beforementioned Company, according to our orders and instructions given to him, and in doing this to give all kindness, aid, and assistance, each for as much as he can undertake, in default of which, contraveners and disobedient persons shall incur our indignation, and shall be punished as they deserve.

“ Done at the meeting of the Directors aforesaid under the seal of the said Company, at Middelburg in Zeeland, the 3rd September, 1678.

(Signed.) JOHAN RADERMACKER and ISAACK VAN PERE.*

From the above Commission and Instructions it appears that the Commandeur was absolute in civil matters, while in criminal cases he was assisted by his Lieutenant and any ship captain who might happen to be in the river. It is probable that a criminal court was only held when the annual vessel arrived, and that prisoners would be detained until this took place. Throughout the Instructions there is no mention of the free settlers, as distinguished from the Company's servants, which shows that they were of trifling importance. There were four Company's plantations, Vryheid on the site of Bartica Grove, Duynenburg and Fortuin south of Kalacoon, and Poelwyk on Caria Island. The provision grounds were at Cartabo, where were probably some logies for the Indians visitors, and the huts of the slaves employed in the cassava fields. The fort was obviously too small to contain any but the garrison, but the village of Cartabo had not yet been established.

* *Notcher's Geschiedenis Essequibo, &c.*

The new Commandeur was not a Skipper, which shows that the old system was now finally abandoned in Essequibo, although still retained in Berbice. He was a man of considerable ability, very consequential and a martinet, full of ideas for improving the settlement, and Essequibo would no doubt have made wonderful progress if the meanness of the Directors had not stood in the way. His ideas were too advanced for a trading Company, and it was not until Essequibo had become a real colony that some of them were carried out. He saw the need of a fort on Flag (Fort) Island, which he actually commenced, and wanted to open the river to settlers of all nations. Another of his ideas was to establish a regular Indian trade with the lower Orinoco. As for the new fort, the Directors would not agree to support two establishments, on account of the cost, while it was utterly impossible to remove the trading factory from Kyk-over-al. The jealousy of the Chamber of Zeeland would not even allow the people of other provinces to go there without special permission, it could not then be expected they would open the river to everybody. The thing was absurd. What was the use of a monopoly if it was held lightly? The Orinoco was too far away to be safe; if the Dutchmen went there the Spaniards might want to come to Essequibo. BEEKMAN must moderate his zeal and hasten slowly; not ruin the Company by expensive and dangerous projects. When he sent his Secretary to Surinam in irons on a charge of evil speaking and conspiracy, the Directors asked him what he meant by such arbitrary proceedings, and told him that he must not fancy himself a Sovereign.

While refusing to listen to BEEKMAN's projects, the Directors were induced to give more attention to those of a settler of Essequibo named JACOB PETERZON DE JONGE.

Being on a visit to the Netherlands, DE JONGE ventilated a project for re-establishing the Pomeroon colony to such

good effect, that the Company fell in with his views. The land near Kyk-over-al was not very fertile, as BEEKMAN had already told the Directors when he advised the removal of the fort, but whereas his project was to come down the river, DE JONGE's was to settle the Pomeroon, where the land was also very rich. After some hesitation the project was agreed to, DE JONGE being appointed Commandeur of the new colony on the 5th of April, 1686, at a salary of fifty guilders a month and a percentage upon all the sugar that might be shipped.

DE JONGE sailed for Essequibo in the regular vessel, taking with him one or two settlers. At Kyk-over-al he was supplied with two or three soldiers, two cannons, a boat, and a few slaves, by means of which a fort was commenced, and the place opened to colonists. The new settlement was advertised in the Netherlands, but without any good result, probably because the advantages of Surinam were greater. As it could not be allowed to compete with Kyk-over-al as a trading post, there was nothing to be done without settlers. DE JONGE bought some Indian slaves and commenced a plantation, but having no regular supplies from the Company, he was hampered very much from the beginning. Even slaves could not be made to work on insufficient food, and although BEEKMAN helped a little, his supplies were never so much in excess as to allow of feeding an extra number of people. Then came a disagreement between the two Commandeurs. It appears that DE JONGE had a brother-in-law at Kyk-over-al named JAN JOOSTEN LANDSHEER, who tried his best to induce the few settlers in Essequibo to go to the Pomeroon, which not pleasing BEEKMAN, he forbade LANDSHEER doing anything of the sort. This was followed by a little disturbance with some Indians, caused by the unscrupulous conduct of the same gentleman in procuring slaves for DE JONGE. Out of spite, the Commandeur of the Pomeroon then wrote to the Directors charging his neigh-

bour with infringing the Articled Letter by trading on his own account. The Indian quarrel led to the following publication :—

Ordinance or Placaat concerning the trade and sale of red Indian slaves, made on the 23rd August 1686.

“ The Heer Commandeur having not only often heard, but even lately seen with regret, that several inhabitants of this river have bought without his knowledge, many red slaves, from Indians who had no right to them, and also that, out of pure malice or through ignorance, free Indians have been made slaves ; on account of which abuses great disturbance and mischief are produced, as happened lately through JAN JOOST LANSHEER, Master planter on the Plantation Laurierboom, by which a white Christian and one of the Company's negroes were murdered, and if not foreseen in time, further mischiefs and disasters may through such actions cause a total ruin of the river ; it has been found good by the said Commandeur, in the name of the West India Company, and by these presents, to make known, that in the River of Isequebe and its districts, no planter or other person whatsoever, either in the Company's service or otherwise, shall be allowed to buy from the Indians, any red slaves, great or small, directly or indirectly, much less to take them from their houses with or without force, unless the master or rightful owner of such slave sold, bring him to the house, and go directly with the buyer to the Commandeur, so that His Honour may have knowledge of the same, and that he may be well-informed of all disputes : All persons contravening this Ordinance shall not only have their slaves confiscated, but also be fined *f*50 for the first offence and *f*100 for the second, together with arbitrary correction according to the circumstances of the case. Every person is required to regulate himself accordingly, and be prepared to suffer loss if he should disobey, and that no one may plead ignorance of this Proclamation, ABRAHAM BEEKMAN, Commandeur of the River Isequebe, has published and affixed it in the usual place.

Done at Kyk-over-al, August 23rd, 1686.

Signed A. BEEKMAN, in the presence of ISAAC DU CASSEL, Secretary, and DE JONGE, Assistant.

BEEKMAN wrote to the Directors on the 4th of November 1687, giving his usual account of the state of affairs in Essequibo, and of his disagreements with DE JONGE. His last two letters had been sent by way of Surinam, having been taken thither by a young Indian in a fishing boat. On the 20th of June he had advised having given over the bark

Bammakens, with his own servants, to DE JONGE, to save him from sending for a boat to Surinam. On the 20th of October he had heard from DE FEEB, Commandeur of Berbice, that some Caribs had arrived there from Surinam, reporting that DE JONGE's party had been arrested and put in irons by the Governor of Surinam, for what reason they did not know. The friends of the Indians were blaming DE JONGE for this trouble and demanding compensation. BEEKMAN had received accounts of the poverty of Pomeroon, and thought it would be better that he should be allowed to govern both settlements as was done by GROENEWEGEL. There had been great expenses but no returns ; they had expected free planters to settle there, but at present the only one was a person named ROCHUS, and in the opinion of BEEKMAN, the place ought to be abandoned. He had freely expressed this opinion to DE JONGE, who became much annoyed, and abused him for it. BEEKMAN then told him that he was ready to stand by his opinion, and that he would try to bring the Directors to the same view. Those who came to settle he had advised to stay in Essequibo as there was better land in that river.

On the 28th of September a New England vessel had arrived. She had been bound from Curacao to Surinam, but having sprung a leak, was obliged to come to Essequibo to be caulked. BEEKMAN had supplied a sail of French duck, of the value of twenty Flemish pounds, to enable her to proceed on her voyage. On board were two passengers, JAN SORET with eleven slaves and JORIS VAN OVERSOEHELDE with thirteen. They had been bound for Surinam with the intention of going to Pomeroon, but on account of the accident, were saved part of the journey. BEEKMAN had succeeded in inducing SORET to remain in Essequibo by giving him a grant of land in the great creek (Groot Creek ?). His companion was also inclined to stay, and had begun to clear some land, but LANDSHEER tried his best, by stories of taxes and fines,

to make him dissatisfied, so that he might leave and go to Pomeroon. BEEKMAN had felt bound to protest against this, and ordered DE JONGE and his relation to desist from interfering with the settlers, and to leave every one to choose for himself.

On the 20th of September he had gone with his whole family to Flag Island for a month, to superintend the erection of the new buildings. In stepping from a boat he had hurt his knee and was obliged to remain in bed for three weeks. He was sorry that he had been unable to attend to the Company's business, but the Sergeant was looking after matters. The new fort was nearly finished ; it only remained to build a house for the Commandeur and a guard-house. The heaviest work had been done ; the palissades were finished and the wood for the cannon-beds would soon arrive, then the slaves of the Company's plantation New Middelburg would return to that estate and make forty or fifty hogsheads of sugar from a field of canes that were then ripe. The land for planting cassava and sugar had been well burnt, and would soon be cleared and planted.

Since the last vessel had left there were no deaths to report, and all the Company's goods and effects were, (thank God), in good condition. All the old negroes had returned to their respective posts among the Indians. There were six of these for anatto, two for balsam copaiba, and two for letter wood. The stores were becoming scarce on account of an influx of eighteen new settlers. He wanted permission to erect a new spirit and general store, where every one could buy what they needed, and thus save much expense and trouble. He also wished to establish a Court to settle disputes between the planters.

The new settlers got some help from the free Indians, but these did very badly, they wanted three or four hundred negroes. The bush had been cut and burnt but there were no hands to plant. Now that the river was getting popu-

lated, some of the settlers went among the Caribs and bought up everything they could get, thus interfering with the rights of the Company. The great trouble was, that these freeplanters went and bought wives from the Indians, and even got them to sell their friends, who were as free as themselves; this led to quarrels.

In BEEKMAN's opinion such abuses had been the cause of the Indian troubles in Surinam. He had ordered that these females should be returned, and had posted a billet warning all persons against doing such things, as they tended to endanger the lives of all of them.

On the arrival of DE JONGE from Europe, BEEKMAN had lent him two cannons (one-pounders); he asked their Honourables to order them to be returned, and as the new fort was then in proper condition, he required some heavier guns (six or eight pounders,) as, being near the sea, he wanted to prevent vessels of an enemy from going up the river.

PIETER VAN WEEKHUYSEN, formerly foreman on one of the Company's estates, had received a settlement of his account, amounting to sixty-one Flemish pounds, and in two years as a free man, had commenced a plantation. For two months he had hired two of the Company's Slaves, and then left secretly for the Pomeroon, without paying his debts. There he had settled with all his goods, and although summoned to return, he refused, which BEEKMAN thought might be an evil example, and tend to encourage the same thing in other bad characters.

The new fort was never occupied, nor were any of BEEKMAN's other recommendations carried out at this time. That they were advisable is proved by the fact that most of them were adopted afterwards. Like many other men of ability he was in advance of his age. If his project for trading posts at the mouth of the Orinoco had been carried out, it is probable that the present boundary dispute with

Venezuela would never have occurred. This is the first instance of a Commandeur struggling against the meanness of the Company, but unfortunately for these colonies, it is by no means the last, for, as we shall see later, the succeeding century is full of instances where progress has been retarded by petty economical ideas. If nothing was ever done for the welfare of a country except with a view to immediate profit, it is to be feared that there would be an end to all progress.

One of BEEKMAN's requests was complied with after a long delay. He had asked in 1683 for a pious and God-fearing man to administer the Sacrament, and *five years afterwards*, in March 1688, a Predicant named RUDOLPH HEYNENS, with his wife and child, arrived at Kyk-over-al. The want of a Minister had been much felt, and on the occasion of a visit by GIDEON BOURSE, the Commandeur of Berbice, and the Predicant of that Colony, in 1683, BEEKMAN was very glad to avail himself of the Reverend gentleman's services to baptise two children and administer the Sacrament. The small salaries caused a difficulty in procuring suitable persons for the office, and it was not rare for several years to elapse between the death or departure of one Predicant and the arrival of another.

The Predicant and his wife lived at Kyk-over-al, and sat at the Commandeur's table, together with the Secretary and one or two other Officials. Divine Service was held at the Fort, probably in the Secretary's room. The boarding system was like that of a vessel at sea, ordinary provisions being provided by the Company, but luxuries and wines had to be paid for, probably by a sort of mess system. BEEKMAN was rather free with his invitations to new comers and ship captains, so that the table became much too expensive for the mean ideas of the Directors, who scolded him now and then for his hospitality. Under such conditions as existed at the fort, the little party of officials might easily

have been excused for entertaining a few visitors, but such was not the opinion of the Company. Being a little headstrong, BEEKMAN did not give much heed to remonstrances on his extravagance, and, when blamed for acting on his own responsibility, he took little notice. As always happens when a man takes a line of his own, he gained some enemies, the most vindictive being DE JONGE and his brother-in-law. These sent petitions to the Directors for his removal, stating that the colony was worse off than in the time of HENDRIK ROL.

BEEKMAN seems to have been very friendly with MATTHYS DE FEER, the Commandeur of Berbice, who probably sometimes visited Kyk-over-al. In 1687 DE FEER informed him of a dispute between the Indians and settlers, which had resulted in the murder of several "Christians" and the plunder of their plantations. He warned BEEKMAN to be on his guard, as the Caribs would be likely to pay a visit to Kyk-over-al. It appears that the system of annual Commandeurs was still kept up in Berbice; mention is made of GIDEON BOURSE in 1683, LUCAS COUDRIE, who improved Fort NASSAU, in 1684, and now in 1687, of MATTHYS DE FEER, but from this time to 1712 the record is entirely wanting.

During the Administration of ABRAHAM BEEKMAN, the profits to the Company of the trade and plantations in Essequibo amounted to about 8000 guilders annually, which, judging by the value of money at that time, would be equivalent to something like £2,000. There were forty soldiers and twelve negro slaves at Kyk-over-al, besides the Commandeur, Secretary, Clerk, and Predicant and his wife. How so large a number of persons could have existed in such a small building is difficult to conceive.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRIVATEERS, 1689—1714.

War with France—Du Casse and the Corsairs—They attack Surinam and are repulsed—Pomeroon destroyed by a French pirate—Pomeroon abandoned—Commandeur Abraham Beekman dismissed—Samuel Beekman appointed—His Instructions—His report on Essequibo—First Court of Policy—Capitation Tax imposed—Condition of Colony—Trade—Posts—Scarcity of horses—Samuel Beekman dies at Kyk-over-al—Secretary Van der Heyden succeeds—Another war with France—Essequibo captured by French privateers and ransomed—Plundered a second time—Van der Heyden confirmed as Commandeur—Berbice captured by Jacques Cassard—Its ransom—The Van Peeres refuse to pay—Berbice ceded to the privateers—They sell the colony to the Van Hoorns Company—Agreement with West India Company to obtain slaves—New Commandeur attempts to re-establish Berbice.

AFTER a peace of eleven years, war was again declared by the Netherlands against France on the 9th of March, 1689. Trouble had been brewing for some time previous on account of the persecution of the French protestants, to whom the Netherlands became a refuge. Then came the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and peace between the two countries became no longer possible. According to the declaration "the king of France having begun a horrible persecution of those of the reformed religion in his country, hath in that persecution involved the subjects of this State, who were only settled in France on account of trade; having parted wives from their husbands and children from their parents; and had so little regard to justice that the Consuls residing there have been used after a cruel and unheard of manner." Dutch WILLIAM

being then king of England, it naturally followed that the two great maritime nations of that age were united against the hereditary foe, and that the West Indies again became the scene of bitter hostilities.

During the late peace both England and France had tried to suppress piracy, which had hitherto been so rampant in the West Indies. In 1686, a number of corsairs, who had made money in the South Sea, settled in Cayenne, began to clear land for plantations, and were in a fair way to success when the war broke out. This put an end to all their ideas of planting, and when a number of privateers arrived under the command of DU CASSE, most of them were eager for anything that savoured of the old roving life.

France was almost without a navy at this time, and the declaration of war was at once followed by the establishment of joint-stock Companies for fitting out privateers. Letters of Marque were granted freely, and money contributed by all manner of persons in hopes of making enormous profits. As the king's ships were not strong enough to prevent trading there was all the more scope for the privateers. Being independent of all control they stuck at nothing, while their conduct was often disgraceful in the extreme, being hardly better than that of the pirates. Prisoners were often tortured most cruelly to make them divulge the location of their secreted valuables, and sometimes murdered when they refused the information. After the goods were sold in a neutral port, or one of their own, they often fought and killed each other in disputes about prize-money. Altogether the system was a most disgraceful one to all the parties concerned, and was even disapproved by the best naval officers of the time.

DU CASSE was one of the most famous commanders of this period. His project was to pillage all the Dutch and English colonies in the West Indies, commencing with Surinam. On the 6th of May, he arrived before Paramaribo

with nine vessels, where he bombarded the fort for three days without success. In retiring from the combat one of his vessels got aground, which the plucky Dutchmen managed to capture with all on board, to the number of a hundred and eighty four men.

Finding Surinam too difficult, he sent two of his vessels to Berbice, which fell an easy prey. The privateers having commenced to pillage and destroy the plantations, Commandeur DE FEER was obliged to promise a ransom of 20,000 guilders to save the colony. For this sum he gave a draft on the Patroons, with the customary hostages, but fortunately for Berbice, the matter was compounded by the Governor of Surinam, who, by holding the French prisoners, was in a position to stipulate for easier terms to the sister colony. Ultimately the matter was settled by a payment of six thousand guilders and a few hogsheads of sugar, and DU CASSE sailed for the Islands, where he had the celebrated fight with ADMIRAL BENBOW.

Meanwhile, although Kyk-over-al had escaped, Pomeroon was not so fortunate. On the 30th of April a French pirate, who does not appear to have been connected with DU CASSE, appeared suddenly before the little fort in Pomeroon. DE JONGE having no force to defend the place, was obliged to run away to Kyk-over-al, leaving the little property and young plantations to be plundered and burnt by the enemy. This pirate is said to have established himself in the Barima, where he obtained help from the Caribs in this raid. There seems to have been some ill-feeling among the Caribs in that quarter, possibly on account of the doings of DE JONGE.

The Commandeur of Kyk-over-al informed the Directors of this disaster on the 6th of July following, and told them they need not be afraid for Essequibo, as it had a proper fort and strong garrison. It was finally resolved by the Ten on the 15th of November, that Pomeroon should be abandoned as far as the settlement was concerned, anything

that remained being removed to Kyk-over-al. A post was however to be kept there, under the charge of three men from Essequibo, where the Company's flag was to be kept flying.

The dissatisfaction with ABRAHAM BEEKMAN ended in his dismissal by the Directors on the 30th of October 1690. His extravagance, and breach of the Articled Letter by establishing a Plantation on his own account, caused the final rupture. It does not appear that the charges against him were considered very grave, as he was allowed to keep his estate and remain in Essequibo. His successor was one of the principal planters of Essequibo, named SAMUEL BEEKMAN, who, when on a visit to the Netherlands, was appointed Commandeur on the 9th of December 1690. His commission was similar to that of ABRAHAM BEEKMAN, but some additions were made to the "Instructions" on account of the delinquencies of the late Commandeur. He was not to establish any estate for himself or his friends, or have any share or interest therein, on any pretext whatsoever, and if he happened to have a share already he must sell it at once. He must not carry on any private trade, on pain of confiscation, nor allow the Captains or other Officers to do so, but examine into all their transactions, and if he found them guilty, dismiss them without wages. On arriving at Essequibo he must make his clerk close the old books and open fresh ones, and bring over the balances; he must close the books in December and send certified copies to the Chamber, with an account of any persons who had died or left the service, and be very careful how he advanced money to the servants, as many of them had transferred their salaries to persons in the fatherland. He must sell slaves for thirty Flemish pounds each, or not less than 3,000 lbs. of sugar, cash, on the same conditions as they were sold in Surinam. JACOB DE JONGE was to be appointed manager of one of the Company's estates, and the Comman-

deur was to see how many slaves HUYBREGT COURT had taken to Berbice, and where they had come from. No trade was to be carried on in Indian slaves, nor were they to be removed from the river. The Indians were to be encouraged to gather as much anatto as they could ; no one was to be allowed to trade in balsam copaiba, it being the monopoly of the Company ; and finally the boats were not to be used except for the Company's benefit.

From these instructions it may be presumed that ABRAHAM BEEKMAN had not been strict enough for the Directors, in allowing Indian slaves to be bought in the river, and taken to Berbice and other places. This touched the African monopoly of the Company, of which it was very jealous. The appointment of JACOB DE JONGE, and the general tenor of the instructions, show that his tale-bearing had been approved.

SAMUEL BEEKMAN arrived at Kyk-over-al in March 1691, and found the colony less flourishing than the Directors supposed. His first report, dated April 8th following, stated that there were at Kyk-over-al and on the three Company's plantations, 48 Europeans, including soldiers, 58 Indian slaves, 14 coloured people, and 165 negro slaves. On the private estates there were several hundred slaves, but as these did not concern the Company, the Commandeur thought it unnecessary to enumerate them. SAMUEL BEEKMAN was very energetic, but more cautious and economical than his predecessor, nevertheless with all his zeal the colony progressed but slowly. In October 1696, the widow of the late Commandeur applied for permission to ship her sugar by way of Surinam, on account of the delay entailed by waiting for the regular vessel. This the Directors allowed, and even permitted her to have the use of the Company's boat for the purpose.

The first Council or Court of Policy was constituted after the arrival of SAMUEL BEEKMAN. By this time the Company's plantations had become of so much importance as to

require a manager for each. These, with the Commandeur and Secretary, formed a Council, which sat occasionally either as a Court of Justice, or to consider the Company's affairs. The free planters had no voice in these matters and it may be presumed knew nothing of the Councils. On the 10th of September 1698, the Ten resolved to impose a Capitation tax of 2½ guilders for each slave, and one stiver per acre on the private plantations. This head-tax became one of the institutions of the Colony, lasting up to the time of the abolition of slavery, under the name of Company's and King's taxes. The acre money on the contrary was never enforced, although the Company tried very hard to get it collected. The Directors thought the expenses of the establishment of Essequibo enormous. There were at this time, at the Fort and on the plantations, 72 European servants of the Company, whose aggregate salaries amounted to 872 guilders (\$348·80) per month besides rations. The Commandeur received seventy guilders, with a free table and a percentage on the produce of the Company's plantations. The importation of more negroes increased the cultivation, and one more Company's estate was planted. The four were Fortuin, Poelwyk, New Middelburg, and West Souberg, from which the produce was increased from about 300 to 500 hhds. of sugar. Besides these there were the provision grounds at Cartabo, from which however there came only a few preserved fruits for export, besides the necessary vegetables for the garrison. The trade in anatto was increased from 50 to 150 brls., while the annual profit rose to about 15,000 guilders. The trading posts were now settled, and there was not so much travelling among the Indians. In 1703 the Commandeur reported that there were then four posts, in Demerara, Mahaica, Pomeroon and Cuyuni. The last was so far up the river that it took thirty days paddling to reach it, and had been established for the purpose of bringing horses from Spanish Guiana. On account

of the jealousy of the Company, no vessels from New England were able to come openly to Essequibo, and therefore the trade for horses could not be carried on as it was in Surinam. The wear and tear of these animals in the old sugar mills was very great ; it can therefore be understood why strenuous efforts were made to provide a supply, although it can hardly be conceived how they could be brought from such a distance, by a river so impeded by rapids. At a later period mules were brought by sea from the Orinoco, partly on account of the difficulties of the journey by way of the Cuyuni, but mainly from a dispute with the Spaniards. These posts were generally in charge of one of the soldiers, who, together with two or three slaves, carried on a barter of iron pots, tools, cutlery, fish hooks, beads, &c., for balsam copaiba, anatto, letter-wood, hammocks and a few other things. At all the posts the Company's flag was hoisted at intervals, as a mark of sovereignty over the districts of which they were centres. Changes were made in their locations at different times ; Post Arinda in the Essequibo, was at first about 25 miles beyond Bartica, afterwards it was removed to the junction with the Siparuni, and finally to the mouth of the Rupununi, according to the necessities of the Indian trade.

SAMUEL BEEKMAN did not enjoy very good health at Kyk-over-al. In 1698 he was allowed to take a trip to the Netherlands, but on his return he again became sickly. He applied for leave of absence a second time in 1703, but on this occasion it was refused. On December 10th 1707, he died, and was buried on Plantation Fortuin. Just before his death he called the Councillors to his bedside, to give them his final instructions and appoint a provisional Commandeur. He nominated the Secretary, PIETER VAN DER HEYDEN RESEN, and asked the managers to acknowledge him as his successor, to which they agreed, only one of them being discontented because he himself had not been chosen.

Meanwhile, the mother country had been at peace since the treaty of Ryswick in 1697, but war was again declared by France against the Emperor, England and the Netherlands, on the 3rd of July 1702. During the war that followed, which lasted eleven years, the French privateers again made their appearance in Guiana, and succeeded in capturing all the Dutch colonies. When ABRAHAM BEEKMAN boasted of being able to protect Essequibo with his forty soldiers, he could hardly have expected the enemy would trouble him in such an out-of-the-way place, as it required very little foresight to see what could and did happen.

On the 18th of October 1708, the watchman of the little Brandwagt or guard-house, near the mouth of the Essequibo, was surprized to see three vessels entering the river. By their build he could easily tell they were not Dutch, and, knowing what might be expected, he and his two comrades embarked in a swift corial to inform the Commandeur that three French privateers were coming up to the Fort. Immediately on this report VAN DER HEYDEN sent a boat to reconnoitre, which returned with the news that the Brandwagt was taken, and the vessels sailing up the river, crowded with armed men.

The Commandeur was very much alarmed, while the few planters were in a state of utter confusion. Some of them collected as much of their portable property as could be carried on the heads of the slaves, and retired with it and them to the bush, while the Manager of Vryheid got together a few friends with a view to protect that plantation, which was on Bartica point. Meanwhile the three vessels had sailed up the river, plundering and burning a few of the Indian villages on its banks, and arrived at Bartica point, where the men prepared to land. The manager sent to Kyk-over-al for soldiers, and, with his little following of friends and slaves, set himself to oppose the landing. No help coming from the fort, he drew up his small force and gave

battle to the enemy, trying to sink the boats, but the privateers, being disciplined and well armed, laughed at the idea of such a rabble attempting to oppose them. It soon followed that the landing was effected, while the gallant Dutchman and his followers were driven into the bush, with a loss of two killed and several wounded, while the privateer leader, Captain ANTOINE FERRY, took up his quarters in the manager's house, making himself free with everything it contained, especially the provisions and wine. From Vryheid the privateers commenced a series of raids on the neighbouring plantations, while VAN DER HEYDEN kept within the fort, amidst the clamouring of the planters, who demanded his assistance to preserve their properties from pillage. The Commandeur, having more discretion than valour, told them that his forty soldiers were of no use against the three hundred of the enemy, and that it was his duty to preserve the fort at all hazards. FERRY had no intention of attacking Kyk-over-al, but like most of the privateers confined his operations at first to pillage. Having taken away everything portable, he sent a boat to the fort under a flag of truce, to demand its capitulation as preliminary to negotiations for a ransom, otherwise the planter's houses and sugar mills would be burnt, and the canes and provision fields destroyed. As the Commandeur was quite at the mercy of the Frenchman, he was obliged to concede this demand, and on the 25th of October the capitulation was signed, by which FERRY agreed to leave the colony, on consideration of a payment of 50,000 guilders. This amount was made up of 112 slaves at 300 guilders each, meat and other provisions from the store, and a thousand pieces of eight (\$1,000.) in cash for himself and his officers. One third of this ransom was paid by the almost ruined owners of the fifteen or sixteen private estates, while the remainder was settled by the Company. *

* *Netches*

As if Essequibo had not been unfortunate enough in the spoliation by FERRY, two more French privateers came up the river in February 1709, and plundered and burnt the four Company's, as well as most of the private, plantations, taking away five hundred hogsheads of sugar, as well as many of the slaves. After their departure there remained only two sugar mills in the whole colony, so that most of the private planters were ruined.

VAN DER HEYDEN asked the Directors for more soldiers, and set to work to repair the damage, so that in two years five sugar mills were in working order.

HARTSINCK has given an account of one of these affairs, in which the Commandeur is said to have called together the chiefs or "owls" of the Indians, and by their aid to have driven out the Frenchmen. If any such victory ever took place it could hardly have been near Kyk-over-al, but possibly it may have been towards the mouth of the Orinoco, where the privateers sometimes had their head quarters, and most likely after the ransom had been settled. The account runs as follows :—

"About the year 1709 two French privateers entered the river Essequibo, and immediately landed some of their men with the intention of seizing the colony, or at least of plundering it. They actually burnt some of the plantations, but were unable to capture the fort. The Commandeur then ordered the captains or Owls of the Indians to march forward with their men for the protection of the colony. These having arrived they assisted in driving off the French, being exasperated the more on account of two of their villages having been burnt when the Frenchmen arrived. Their boldness was so great, that they carried away the French colours from the place where the Guard was stationed, whom they found engaged in feasting on stolen cattle. On seeing the Indians a few of the privateers sallied out to attack them, but the Indians hid in the bush, from

whence they saluted their pursuers in such a manner that they were glad to return to their comrades, whilst the Indians sallied forth and carried the colours in triumph to the fort.*"

On the 4th of October 1710, VAN DER HEYDEN was confirmed by the Ten as Commandeur of Kyk-over-al. He seems to have been very cautious and economical, which pleased the Directors, who were better satisfied with his behaviour than were the planters. Notwithstanding the misfortunes of the Colony, the shipment of May previous had amounted to a hundred and sixty hogsheads of sugar, fifty barrels of anatto, and over eight hundred flasks of balsam copaiba. About this time it became necessary to send two vessels annually to bring away the produce, and as those which followed the above were both taken by the French, the Company experienced another heavy loss. In the same year, the inhabitants petitioned the Ten to erect a new fort on Flag Island, at the same place where ABRAHAM BECKMAN had formerly commenced his fortification, so as to prevent an enemy from entering the river to plunder the plantations, but the cost being considered too great the matter was again shelved.

Berbice had remained unmolested by ANTOINE FERRY and the other privateers, to experience a great misfortune in 1712, from the French corsair JACQUES CASSARD.

"The Hero of Nantes," as CASSARD was called, was one of the most celebrated of the great privateers, and is honoured by having his statue still standing in front of the Bourse of his native town. The French are very proud of his exploits, but judged by the moral code of the present day, he would only be put down as a daring ruffian and the leader of a band of desperadoes. In 1712 a great expedition was fitted out at Marseilles to plunder the Dutch colonies in the West Indies, of which CASSARD was Commodore, and the BARON

* *Hartsteeck's Beschryving van Guiana*. Possibly this may refer to the later raid, or the two are mixed up in some manner.

DE MOUANS Commander of the troops supplied by the King. Half the shares belonged to CASSARD, the remainder being held by five Merchants, MESSRS. JOSEPH MAILLET, JAN DIU, MICHIEL GLAISE, NICOLAS GUITTON and ROUSSEL and Company. After capturing the CAPE DE VERDE Islands, CASSARD proceeded to Surinam, where he arrived on the 8th of October, with eight large and thirty small vessels, manned by soldiers and rough seamen to the number of three thousand. With such a force nothing could stand before him; he passed the fort and town and went up the river, where he had all the plantations at his mercy, and threw the whole colony into a state of consternation. Many of the planters sent their slaves to hide in the bush, where they concealed themselves so effectually that some of them could never be found again, but went to form the camps of Bush Negroes which gave such trouble to the colonists in after years. One of CASSARD's exploits was to break into the Jewish Synagogue, kill a hog within the walls, and sprinkle the blood over the whole place to defile it, which he considered good sport. After ravaging the colony to his heart's content he agreed to accept a ransom of 747,350 guilders Surinam currency (ƒ622,800, Dutch). After a great deal of trouble this amount was raised, and paid in sugar, Negro and Indian slaves, merchandise, provisions, cattle, stores, cash and jewellery. The sugar was priced at ƒ48·15 per hhds., while that from Berbice was estimated at ƒ30; what was the reason of this it is hard to conjecture, unless there was a difference in quality or size of the hogshead. Having received the ransom, CASSARD left Surinam on the 6th of December and proceeded to the West Indies, where he captured Antigua, Montserrat, and Curaçao.

Meanwhile, during his delay in Surinam, CASSARD sent three of the large vessels and some smaller craft to Berbice, under the command of BARON DE MOUANS, where they arrived on the 8th of November.

The *Brandwagt*, known under the name of Redoubt Samson, being deserted from the want of soldiers, the enemy arrived before Pln. Hoofd on the 10th, before any alarm was given to Fort Nassau. Here they landed, took possession of the plantation, and proceeded along the bank of the river until within sight of the fort, where they threw up some earth-works. On the 11th a parley was demanded, and Commandeur WATERMAN called upon to strike his flag and surrender. This being refused, the privateers bombarded the place until the 14th, throwing 150 bombs into the fort and neighbouring houses, killing or wounding many of the defenders. The mischief was all the greater on account of one of the soldiers belonging to the fort, a Frenchman named FRANCOIS TIROL, deserting to the enemy and showing them the most assailable points. Meanwhile the fort had been surrounded, and the plantations lay at the mercy of the corsairs, who commenced their work of pillage. Seeing that it was useless to continue the defence, on the 14th the Commandeur ordered the *Ohamade* to be beaten as a sign of surrender, and asked for a day's truce. This having been granted, DE MOUANS entered the fort, accompanied by a strong escort, to arrange the terms of capitulation. The demands of the enemy were so enormous, that they frightened WATERMAN and his Council, and it was not until they were threatened with fire, and the destruction of the whole colony, that they reluctantly agreed to pay half the amount. This was 300,000 guilders, and that being agreed upon, there came the question of how it was to be paid. Money was hardly current anywhere in the West Indies at that time, the standard of exchange being sugar; even fines being paid in so many pounds of this article. After a great deal of haggling the French agreed to take all the sugar belonging to the Patroons, some slaves, stores, and a bark, amounting altogether to 118,024 guilders, and the balance in a Bill of Exchange drawn by the Comman-

deur and his Council on the house of VAN PEERE to the order of *BABON DE MOUANS*.

The matter was not yet settled however, this being only the ransom of the fort and six plantations of the *Patroons*; for the estates and goods of the private planters they insisted on obtaining 10,000 guilders in cash, as prize money to the officers and men of the squadron. Such an amount in cash (equal to about £2,500 now) did not exist in the colony, and the poor inhabitants were in the utmost consternation. What to do they knew not, however they collected all their little hoards together, bringing forth every piece of plate and jewellery that had been brought from the fatherland, and at last succeeded in gathering the value of 6,000 guilders. This did not satisfy the greedy corsairs, and the people were told to go back for more; if they had no money let them bring whatever they could collect. At last, by denuding themselves of their very means of subsistence, they raised the balance in provisions, stores and a few hogsheads of sugar. The sugar was valued at *f*30 a hogsheads of about 700 lbs, the adult negroes at *f*300, and the children of ten to twelve years at *f*110. All the money that could be collected only amounted to *f*936.11 (\$374.62), while the gold and silver jewellery and plate came to *f*5,138.1.

The Governing Council of Berbice then consisted of the Commandeur and the six managers of the colony plantations, whose names were *STEVEN DE WATERMAN*, *LAURENS DE FREE*, *M. HEYN*, *Claas Ras*, *ANTONY TIERENS*, *HENDRIK VAN DOORN* and *GERARD DE VEERMAN*. As *De Mouans* required hostages as security for the draft on Messrs. *JAN* and *CORNELIS VAN PEERE*, the last two Councillors were chosen, and by them it appears the Commandeur sent an account of the affair to the *Patroons*, asking them to pay the money as soon as possible, so that the prisoners might be liberated. This was dated January 2nd 1713, and it may be presumed that the privateers left Berbice the next day.

When the Patroons were called upon to accept the Bill of Exchange, they were very angry and absolutely refused. It was more than the place was worth, they said, and the Commandeur had no authority to promise such a ransom ; besides which it was out of all proportion to that of Surinam, which colony was worth more than ten times as much as Berbice. Meanwhile, one of the hostages, VEERMAN, had died on the voyage, while the other had been sent to Toulon, where he remained for a year and a half, and then died a prisoner.

JOSEPH MAILLET sent the Bill to his correspondents in Amsterdam, Messrs VAN DE CRUYS, SON, and ENGELBEETS, who, when the VAN PEEBES refused either to accept or pay it, entered a formal protest on the 12th of May 1713, and another on the 17th of November following, when the Patroons agreed to compound the matter by ceding the colony to CASSARD and the five equippers of the squadron.

Here was a dilemma ; a colony belonging to the Netherlands, given over to another nation, without reference to either the States General, or its feudal lord the West India Company. To add to the difficulty peace had been signed at Utrecht on the 14th of April 1713, when all disputes had been settled and nothing said of Berbice. The French Ambassador at the Hague brought the matter before the States General, but they would have nothing to do with it, as it was only a mercantile transaction.

It may be presumed that both the VAN PEEBES as well as the Marseilles merchants thoroughly understood the difficulties of the position, and it almost seems as if the Dutchmen were haggling for the purpose of getting back the colony on easy terms. Berbice would have been of no use to MAILLET and his friends even for a trading post, as the mercantile laws would prevent commerce with either France or the Netherlands, while it was utterly impossible to establish a French government in a Dutch colony. Even if it

had been possible to transfer the place to the King of France, they would have been no farther advanced towards getting the prize money. Privateers never took possession, but tried by threats of pillage and destruction to obtain as great a ransom as possible, only the King's ships being able to capture a colony. Instead therefore of taking immediate possession of Berbice, M. MAILLET went to Amsterdam himself to see what could be done. Here he offered to sell either the Bill of Exchange or the colony itself, and after some delay entered into negotiations with the VAN HOORNS and SCHUURMAN. These merchants appear to have been backed by CORNELIS VAN PEERE, although his name was naturally kept out of the transaction, who gave them every facility and promised to transfer to them the rights of the old proprietors. Then they went to the West India Company, and being influential shareholders, obtained its support, with an agreement to supply them with slaves, which was sanctioned by the States General on the 10th of September, 1714. After doing all this VAN HOORN and SCHUURMAN offered 108,000 guilders for the Bill, which it will be remembered was for £180,975·6, and on the 24th of October, JOSEPH MAILLET, as representing the equippers of the squadron, passed an Act of Cession, whereby Berbice was transferred to Messrs. NICOLAAS VAN HOORN, HENDRIK VAN HOORN, ARNOLD DIX and PIETER SCHUURMAN. By payment of this sum the purchasers became entitled to all the privateers' rights, hypothecations and preferences upon Berbice, and whatever belonged to it, and were authorised to take possession of the colony. To complete the transaction an *Acte van Abandon* was passed on the 28th of November, by which JOHAN and CORNELIS VAN PEERE, MARIA VAN PEERE widow of CORNELIS KIEN, and THOMAS ALEXANDER KONINK, the late owners of the colony, ceded all their rights to the VAN HOORNS and their associates.

There is very little to be gleaned as to the situation of

Berbice during the period of about two years that this difficulty lasted. The Act of Cession refers to two ship-loads of sugar having been taken by CASSARD during this interval, and the sending of the two vessels to Berbice with supplies from France, which transactions were to be accounted for and the difference between the values of the cargoes taken and returned deducted from the £108,000. Whether there was any representative of the privateers in the colony is doubtful ; but it may be presumed that the position was so very uncertain that no interference from either party took place. WATERMAN remained as Commandeur, but could do very little to re-establish the colony until the dispute was settled, while the free settlers were naturally very anxious. As may be seen by the enormous difference in the ransom of the colony and private plantations, the colonists in Berbice were few, and their properties of little value.

CORNELIS VAN PEERE, notwithstanding his declaration of the little value of Berbice, took a share in the New Company. They found the colony in a very low condition. By the loss of 259 of the best slaves the colony plantations were rendered unworkable, some of them being actually abandoned, while the private planters were almost disheartened. During the late crisis planting had almost ceased, as there was no certainty of their being able to ship the sugar when it was prepared. The first business was to replace the slaves, by requesting the West India Company to send for 250 Angola negroes. These were to be delivered in Berbice in the proportion of two-thirds men and one-third women, at the rate of £212,10 (\$85) per head for "pieces d' India," that is robust and healthy negroes of between 15 and 30 years of age, and £165 for the "Macque-rons," those who were weak and sickly. The separation of the healthy from the sick was to take place on the fourth or fifth day after arrival, by four persons on behalf of the Company, viz., the Captain, two pilots or mates, and the

ship's surgeon, and the same number chosen by VAN HOORN and SCHUURMAN. Any future importations were to be paid for at the rate of f250 (\$100) per head for "pieces d' India," 100 guilders in Amsterdam on the sailing of the vessel, and the balance on delivery, or at such time as should be agreed on, the Company taking the risk of the voyage. If the Company should be unable to import the slaves, VAN HOORN and SCHUURMAN might, under proper recognition of their High Mightinesses, send a vessel to Africa at their own cost, provided they took away no more than the number agreed upon. Except in the last case, no slaves were to be bartered for or bought otherwise than through the Company, and in the event of their at any time abandoning the Colony, they would be free to remove their slaves and effects.

For each vessel sent to Berbice, the Directors were to be paid 300 guilders, as a tax to the Company, one hundred being paid on the departure of the ship and the balance on her return, besides the commission on the importation, as paid by Surinam and other colonies, and all sugar was to be brought to the Company's stores. The first vessel was to be free of the hundred guilders on her departure but was to pay the two hundred on her return whether she brought a cargo from Berbice, or had to take it in at Curaçao or Surinam.*

The old system of annual Commandeurs was now finally abolished in Berbice, WATERMAN being dismissed, and one of the Councillors, ANTONY TIERENS, appointed in his place. Attempts were made to open up new colony plantations, but the want of labour and capital was much felt. Slaves were not imported in sufficient numbers, probably on account of the stringency of the conditions. While in Surinam anyone could get a credit of eighteen months, here two-fifths of the value was to be paid down before the slave ship left Am-

* *Hartstuck Beschryving van Guiana.*

sterdam. Without a good supply of labour very little could be done, the produce of the plantations being small, while the Indian trade had become much reduced during the last few years.

CHAPTER III.

ESSEQUEBO AS A YOUNG COLONY, 1714—1738.

Recovery from the raids of privateers—Proposed fort near the mouth of the river—Kyk-over-al crowded—Huis Naby established—Courts of Policy and Justice—Condition of the young colony—Van der Heyden dismissed—Laurens de Heere appointed Commandeur—Plantations commenced near the mouth of the Essequibo—Fertility of lower lands as compared with those near the fort—Expeditions to prospect for minerals and to trade among the Indians—Coffee introduced—De Heere dies and is succeeded by Secretary Gelskerke—Predicant Grevenbroek arrives—Slave riot on Plantation Poelwyk—New fort commenced—Colonial Records—Jan Dudenjon—Christian Finet and the pigs—Quarrel at a funeral—Indian slaves—Burgher Militia—Extra head-tax proposed for defence of colony—First Land Grants—English vessels arrive with horses—Slaves wanted—Advice of a planter as to the treatment of slaves.

WHILE Berbice had been plunged in difficulties, Essequibo was recovering under the energetic and careful administration of Commandeur VAN DER HEYDEN, so that from 1713 to 1715 the profits amounted to £17,000 annually. Renewed attempts were made to induce emigration from the Netherlands, and advertisements published in the different Dutch newspapers, giving florid accounts of the colony and its advantages. Since the peace there was no longer any dread of privateers, and three of the Company's plantations had been re-established. There was yet however a feeling of insecurity. Most of the plantations were still in the neighbourhood of Kyk-over-al, but the position of that fort as a defence was a very bad one. The question of a proper fort at the

mouth of the river again came to the front, causing many disputes between the Commandeur and the free planters. VAN DER HEYDEN reasoned that the mouth of the river was too broad to be commanded by Fort Island, which could defend only one channel, while a privateer might easily pass on the west side and plunder the plantations without hindrance. In case of a riot among the slaves, the want of Kyk-over-al would be much felt, and besides that, there was the difficulty of calling together the Council, if the Commandeur lived so far from the Company's plantations. The planters near the fort sided with the Commandeur, while those who had taken up land about Groot Creek and below, wanted protection. The Directors would not even think of keeping up two fortifications, so the matter again dropped.

By this time Kyk-over-al had been found much too small to accommodate the officials and the garrison, as well as the trading goods and stores. How this little place could have contained such a number of persons, without this being discovered long before, is difficult to comprehend. Now an epidemic sickness broke out, and it became absolutely necessary to do something. The matter having been represented to the Directors, in 1716, they gave VAN DER HEYDEN permission to erect a Colony House at Cartabo, and two years afterwards it was completed. It went by the name of the "Huis Naby" (the house near by), from its situation near the fort. Kyk-over-al was now left to the garrison, while the Commandeur and the civil servants lived in the new building. One of its rooms was used as a Council Chamber and Church, while the lower floor was occupied by the Company's store. The land in the neighbourhood was laid out in building lots, with a view to establish a town,—it even went by the name of "*Stad Cartabo*" and had a tavern and two or three small houses, but never contained enough dwellings to entitle it to the name of town or even village.

In 1718 the constitution of the Council was altered, and it became a "Raad van Politie en Justitie."* It was only one Council, composed of the Commandeur, Secretary, Assistant or clerk, and two managers of the Company's plantations, and acted as a Court of Justice or Council of the Company's affairs once a quarter. There was nothing like a representative government, the Company being absolute, sending out instructions on the most petty matters, which the Commandeur was bound to enforce. The private planters numbered about fifteen, under each of whom were two or three overseers, besides a carpenter and cooper, all whites, who superintended the twenty to thirty slaves. These last were either Indians or negroes, but field work was generally done by the latter, while the former were employed in hunting and house work. Besides these there were a few "creole" slaves, the offspring of connections between African men and Indian women. There being always an excess of men among the imported cargoes, while the Caribs killed off the boks † and captured the bokeens, this class became of some importance, as will be seen later. On each of the Company's plantations there was generally a surgeon, but the office was often vacant on account of the small salary. Even when filled, it was by the veriest tyro, little better than a barber and blood-letter, in fact, he acted in the capacity of shaver to the Europeans.

At the Huis Naby matters did not go on very smoothly. It seems as if the Directors encouraged a sort of spy system, under which one official often wrote petty complaints of another, and especially, they all told tales of the Commandeur. His relations with the Directors were already strained in 1718, when he quarrelled with his Secretary, HERMANUS GELSKERKE, and sent him back to the Netherlands.

* Properly Political or Legislative, and Judicial Council, afterwards known as Courts of Policy and Justice. The word Council is used as the best translation of Raad.

† Bok, Dutch, a barbarian, bushman, figuratively Fan.

The discharged Secretary made his case so good in the eyes of the Directors, that they restored him again to his post, and discharged VAN DER HEYDEN on the 24th of July, 1719. To add to the Commandeur's humiliation, the Council was ordered to send him to the Netherlands at once, and, if he refused to go willingly, to arrest him; the supreme control being meanwhile vested in the Councillors, until a new Commandeur should be appointed.

On the 5th of April, 1721, LAURENS DE HEERE, who was well acquainted with Essequibo, was appointed Commandeur. Like the planters in the colony, he knew that the land near the mouth of the river was far more fertile than that in the neighbourhood of Kyk-over-al, and on assuming the government, he at once began to lay out a new Company's plantation at the mouth of the Bonasika Creek, near Fort Island, which he named Pelgrim. This led the van in a movement which was of the utmost importance to the colony—a slow but almost general migration towards the coast. Up to the period in question, the line of tangled mangrove swamp, which formed the shores of Guiana, had been left in its native wildness. Consisting as it did of oozy black mud, covered by the sea at high tides, it would have been most repulsive to any but a Dutchman, yet as we well know, it is one of the richest soils on the face of the globe when properly drained. The neighbourhood of Kyk-over-al on the contrary, is sandy and undulating, with beds of granite cropping out here and there, having fertile river bottoms, but generally comparatively barren. It had its advantages however, in natural drainage and easy cultivation, but when against these were placed the fact that the crop of canes became less and less every year, until about the fifth crop was almost worthless, the prospects of the planter did not look so bright. As an illustration the following table of crops obtained in

Surinam, may be taken as also representing those of Essequibo :—

One (first)	crop sugar canes at 3,000 lbs. sugar per acre.
Two (second)	" 2,000 lbs. "
Three (third)	" 1,500 lbs. "
Four (fourth)	" 1,000 lbs. "
Five (fifth)	" 800 lbs. " *

The forest was cut down in the early part of the year, and the trees left on the ground until September or October, when, being dry, they were set on fire, and the clearing planted during the short rainy season of December to February. It has been always customary for the Indians to burn and plant a new provision field at intervals of four or five years, but it is obvious that this sort of cultivation would be very troublesome as well as expensive. The significance of the new departure of DE HEERE will be well understood when it is taken into account that drainage systems require large capital, and could not be undertaken by poor settlers with only twenty to thirty slaves each. We may therefore look upon Plantation Pelgrim as the pioneer of the era of a wealthy plantocracy, which ultimately, after a long struggle, overthrew the Company altogether.

Another important innovation of DE HEERE's government is interesting, not for its success, but from its bearing on the present gold industry. By resolution of a meeting of the Ten, April 5th, 1721, persons were permitted to explore the interior for minerals, for which purpose they might be supplied with slaves at a reasonable price. The Chamber of Zeeland also authorised the Commandeur to send an expedition in search of new commercial products, and to open up a trade in the far outlying districts, among the strange tribes of Indians. The expedition, which consisted of two qualified officers, twenty soldiers, eight or

* Case and Replication of Jeronimy Clifford.

ten slaves, and some Indians, made a perilous journey into the interior, but without any satisfactory result. The Company also sent out some miners on its own account, who prospected the rivers and found silver ore in the upper Cuyuni, but not in paying quantities.

DE HEERE tried his utmost to please the Directors, by endeavouring to increase the production of the Company's plantations. He introduced coffee from Surinam, and, in 1725, had more than thirty thousand young trees, but on account of the unsuitability of the soil, it did not thrive, besides which the negroes could not then be induced to take to the work of picking and preparing it, which was too tedious for them. Indigo was also tried, but with indifferent success, the slaves objecting to this also. It might be supposed that the negroes could be compelled to do anything their masters wished, but such was not really the case, on the contrary, when they set themselves in opposition to any particular work, no coercion would end in anything more than an unprofitable result. Owing to the Commandeur's exertions, his last shipment, in 1728, amounted to 436 hhds. sugar, 51 brls. anatto, 4 brls. balsam copaiba and 24 bags coffee.

DE HEERE again revived the project for establishing a new fort near the mouth of the river, and succeeded so far that the engineer, A. LESLORANT, was sent from the Netherlands to project a fortification on Great Flag Island. A horn-work and wooden redoubt, protected by strong palisades, was to be erected on the north side of the island. but like the former attempts, it fell through, probably on account of the expense.

The Commandeur died at the Huis Naby on the 9th of March, 1729, of cancer, and was provisionally succeeded by the Secretary, HERMANUS GELSKERKE, who by a Resolution of the Ten, of April 12th, 1721, had been authorised to assume the command at once, in case of death or any

accident to his superior, to prevent confusion or possible discord.

GHELKERKE was appointed Commandeur on the 11th of October, 1729. He was an old soldier, and seems to have been a man of some ability, and one who took a great interest in the progress of the colony. For his encouragement, the Directors, by a Resolution of the 14th of March, 1731, gave him a commission of two per cent. on the sales of indigo, coffee and cacao, grown on the Company's plantations, in addition to his salary and rations. As an inducement to energy on the part of the Company's managers, they were also allowed a like commission on the same articles grown under their care. Neither Commandeur nor managers, however, could have gained much by these allowances, as sugar and cotton were the staple products of the colony, while the other articles gradually dropped out of cultivation, being entirely wanting in the official returns of the shipments, about 1749.

From 1724 to 1730, there had been no Predicant in Essequebo. Owing to the small salary, which was only about thirty guilders a month, besides the free table, it was very difficult to get a respectable married minister to go to the colony. Since RUDOLPH HEYNENS, there had been three Predicants, JODOCUS BATE, 1699-1703, JOHANNES VAN GOLDSBERGEN, 1706-10, and ZACHARIAS HOFMAN, 1719-24.

None of these had been quite the sort of person suitable for the place, they being more ready to abuse and find fault, than to try and improve matters, while on account of their petty salaries they were very eager to obtain contributions from the private planters, not sparing in abuse when these did not come in as freely as they wished. GOLDSBERGEN remained in the colony as a planter, but the others went back to the Netherlands, and, as may be seen from the dates when they held office, several years passed before their successors arrived.

At last, on the 10th of October, 1730, HUBERTUS VAN GRAVENBROEK was appointed Predicant, and arrived in Essequibo soon afterwards. He is said to have been a model minister, very pious, gentle and unassuming, a true Christian and a blessing to the colony. He was so much beloved and esteemed, that when he wanted to go back to the fatherland, the inhabitants most earnestly begged him to remain, saying that they should never be able to find another so good and suitable. Having allowed himself to be persuaded, by love for his congregation, he remained for 31 years, until, becoming old and infirm, he was obliged to retire. He never asked for a higher salary, but the Directors sometimes sent him a cask of red wine for a present, while he was able to supplement his pay by carrying on a sugar plantation, for which he received a grant. On his arrival there was no church, but he officiated at the Huis Naby; later there were two places of worship, one on Fort Island and the other at Ampa. His congregations were not very large, and it is said that he sometimes had to preach to almost empty benches, however he was not satisfied with simply preaching, but visited the plantations at regular intervals, where he was received with the greatest possible show of love and respect. He was married and had a daughter, who afterwards became the wife of Secretary SPOORS.

Up to this time there had been little trouble with the slaves, as the number on each estate was small, but with the increase to from fifty to a hundred on each plantation, came a series of disturbances which could only be suppressed by very strong measures. In 1731 arose the first serious trouble, which happened at Pln. Poelwyk, on Caria Island, one of the Company's estates. One Sunday, Manager LAMAN went to the Huis Naby to hear a sermon from Dr. GRAVENBROEK, leaving a white cooper to take charge of the plantation during his absence. As often happened in

the absence of the master, the slaves became somewhat turbulent. They gathered round the white man in charge of the store, and commenced begging for one thing or another like a lot of children, and when told that only the master could give them presents, they became dissatisfied. Finally, a number of the most unruly, united in demanding tobacco, which the cooper was bound to refuse. They then became clamorous, and some of them having managed to secure axes and cutlasses, threatened to break open the store. By this time the three other white men of the plantation came forward, and uniting with the cooper stood up with drawn hangers to defend the building. The mob now became enraged, rushed in a body on the four whites, and attacked them with such fury that they were immediately killed, and almost hacked to pieces. Then followed a horrible scene. The men raging with the madness of passion, broke into the store and filled themselves with the common rum called kill-devil, while the women and children ran away with the more substantial articles. Lost to all sense of decency, they danced in front of the manager's house like a lot of devils. Not satisfied with having killed the white men, they now cut off their heads and kicked these from one to another as foot-balls. Finally they prepared to sack the house.

A little house-boy had watched all this in fear and trembling, but, when he saw the troop of fiends coming upstairs, he fled through a window and ran towards the river, followed by one or two hooting rioters. To escape pursuit he jumped into the water, and being a good swimmer, with a strong current in his favour, was soon beyond their reach and floating down the Massaruni towards Cartabo. After swimming for about an hour he landed on the west bank to await his master's return.

Manager LAMAN, coming home from church, was surprised to hear his little negro boy hailing the boat, and to see him

standing among the bushes waving his hands and calling out *Massa! Massa!* Ordering the boat to be pulled ashore, the Manager listened attentively to the boy's story, and then taking him on board, quickly returned to *Cartabo*. Here the boy told his tale to the *Commandeur*, who, on hearing of the state of affairs, immediately ordered his Lieutenant and twenty soldiers to proceed to *Pln. Poelwyk*.

On their arrival they found everything in confusion. The house and store had been sacked, furniture and other moveables being broken to pieces and scattered round the negro yard, while most of the rioters were lying about drunk and exhausted. There was no difficulty in securing them, which having been done, the remains of their victims were collected and buried, and some attempt made to remove the traces of the confusion.

The following day five of the ringleaders were taken to the *Huis Naby*, where the Council of Justice gave them a fair trial, and sentenced the principal murderer to be burnt to death, while the other four were to receive severe floggings. As a warning to the others, the execution took place on the plantation. After the floggings, the one condemned to death was fastened by chains to a post, and burnt at a slow fire. His power of endurance was so great, that after he was half charred, he asked for a pipe of tobacco, and coolly smoked it until his head fell forward and he died.

GELSKERKE went so far in the erection of the new fort, that in 1733 he reported it to the Directors as being in a state to defend itself, although not yet finished. All the planters had been required, in turn, to furnish slave labour, but the *Commandeur* wanted more labourers and materials. Before it could be worth much, he told the Directors, it would require more guns of a heavier kind, as well as proper ammunition, and again, the garrison must be increased. In answer to these requests they complained of the great expense of keeping up the colony, and the smallness of the

profits, which were quite inadequate to carry out his ambitious projects. There were then in Essequibo 66 Europeans, servants of the Company, and 854 slaves, distributed at the fort, Cartabo, the five Company's plantations, and the trading posts. The private estates numbered 25 to 30, averaging three Europeans and about sixty slaves on each; the whole population may therefore be estimated at about three thousand, besides the free Indians. Although an older settlement than Surinam, Essequibo was nothing in comparison, there being in the greater colony something over 200 plantations and 12,000 slaves.

With the year 1735, commence the Minutes of the Court of Justice of Essequibo, as far as they have been preserved as Colonial Records. The first volume extends from July 12th, 1735, to July 1st, 1743; it is not the original Minute Book, but is one of a set copied in 1777, by direction of the Commandeur and Council of Demerara, to prevent the necessity of visiting Essequibo when they wanted to refer to authorities and precedents. The first Record is a Power of Attorney dated July 12th, 1735, whereby THEOPHILUS and JOHANNIS BATE of this river empowered Mr. MARINUS and Miss JOHANNA SPOORS, traders of Middelburg, to negotiate two obligations of £2,000 and £1,000 respectively, and render proper accounts. Other legal documents of a similar nature, with Bills of Lading and Wills, together with the Minutes of the Court, make up the contents of the book. Among the Bills of Lading is one of 4 hhds. of sugar at $4\frac{1}{2}$ doits* a pound, and average accustomed, shipped by the Predicant to ISAAC PARKER, of Middelburg, and another of one aam (40 glns.) balsam copaiba, well sealed, 1 brl lime juice, 1 keg preserves, and 1 parcel vanilla, well dried. The wills generally provided small legacies to the poor, which, with a proportion of most of the fines and a vendue tax, formed the first Poor Fund.

* A small coin eight of which made a stiver.

Many of the charges brought before the Court are interesting from the light they throw on the manners and customs of the time. One of the most troublesome characters was a private planter named JAN DUDONJON, who gave a great deal of work to the Council. On the 10th of August 1735, after prayers, the Commandeur read a letter from DUDONJON in which he complained that the Court would not do him justice, and used improper expressions which they thought unfit for any Burgher, and which ought to be most severely corrected. It appears that HENDRIK DE BRUYN could not meet his engagements, and petitioned the Court to protect him for a time, which was granted, all the creditors except DUDONJON being willing to wait. When offered sugar in payment, the obstinate creditor had refused to receive it and demanded immediate cash. The Court having considered the matter, concluded that it was a thing which could not be tolerated, and resolved that DUDONJON be put under civil arrest at Kyk-over-al for fourteen days, fined £100 to the poor, thirty stivers a day to the officer, (jailor) for his board, and the expenses of Justice. This they hoped would serve as a warning to him against setting himself in opposition to the Court.

On the 16th of July, 1736, DUDONJON was concerned in another case. PHILIP MERCIER agreed to hire his boat to MARIE LAFOND for £250, to carry her and her goods to Surinam, she agreeing to furnish provisions for the voyage. After embarking at Supenaam, she found the boat unseaworthy, and was compelled to hire another vessel from JAN DUDONJON. Having paid the money, she wanted reimbursement, and the Court ordered MERCIER to pay DUDONJON £60 for his boat, and the cost of a sail which the plaintiff had bought. MERCIER complained, that having gone to DUDONJON's plantation, he had been struck by the owner and had a stone thrown at him, while DUDONJON brought a counter-charge that Mercier had boasted " he could buy him and

all his baggage, and wouldn't give a snap for his wife"; this had annoyed him, and he admitted having given the blow. DUDONJON was fined thirty guilders, while MERCIER was warned not to insult any one again, or he would be severely punished.

In March, 1740, DUDONJON brought up a Power of Attorney, which he admitted had been signed by only one witness when drawn up, the other signature having been obtained afterwards, for which illegal act he was "forgiven this time." In July following, he was cited, but did not appear, to answer a charge of scandal against a lady. Having been elected a Kiesheer, his conduct became so disgraceful that the other members of the College refused to sit with him. Then, being about to leave the Colony, he asked for the usual certificate of good character, which was refused, and a little while afterwards he was ordered to remain and answer a charge of attempting to murder one JAN CHRISTIANSEN. At last he was ignominiously expelled from the College of Kiesheers as well as the Burghers.

CHRISTIAN FINET appeared before the Court on the 3rd of January, 1736, under a very curious charge. One Sunday when the REV. DR. GREVENBROEK was serving the Communion in the little Church at Ampa, FINET went on board an English bark to buy pigs, and, while the service was being read, drove them past the Church, where they made so much noise that the whole congregation was disturbed. The defendant excused himself by saying that he had acted without evil intention. The Court did not consider this defense sufficient, but, "that the Sabbath might not be again profaned in that way," fined him twelve guilders for the poor, and cautioned him not to do the like again on pain of a heavier punishment.

On the same day J. A. KEYSER, J. H. MOENK, L. BEETO and G. WYTLAND, were charged with making a disturbance on Pln. New Hope, at the funeral of Surgeon TEYSERINGH.

BERTO had commenced the row by enquiring why a glass of wine had been thrown away, and having struck WYTLAND, a fight ensued. KEYSER, the manager of Good Hope, was blamed for not having done his duty in preventing disorder, and for speaking disrespectfully of a surgeon who had died years before, and also for saying that there were no educated persons at present in the Council, and that nobody except M. BUSSON had any idea of government. KEYSER having denied the charges, two witnesses were brought to prove them, and the Court to prevent such language in future, fined him £50, and BERTO, as the originator of the disturbance, £25.

The captain of the *Swaan* was called to account on the 5th of March, 1736, for letting his vessel get aground, so that she had to be brought back and unloaded, to the disadvantage of the shippers. The blame having been laid on the pilot, he was questioned on oath, and stated that a new bank had formed exactly in the entrance of the river, which he had never seen before.

Disputes arising from the Indian slave trade were frequent. A proclamation to regulate this traffic had been published in 1717, permitting each colonist to have six red slaves, who might be procured from the Orinoco either by purchase or exchange, for each of whom a tax of £6 was to be paid, in addition to the usual head tax of £2.10 (one rix dollar). They were not to be removed from the river or sold to others than the inhabitants of the colony, and if they were sold or exchanged among the inhabitants, a tax of five rix dollars on the transfer was to be paid to the Company, half by the seller and the remainder by the buyer. Notwithstanding the clearness of this order, some of the planters stretched it in such a manner that they bought six slaves every time they went to the Orinoco.

The trade with the Indians by others than servants of the Company, came up for consideration by the Council of

Justice on the 10th of August, 1735. Some of the colonists had taken advantage of them on various pretences, and it was ordered that a warning be published. Any person found taking goods or other property from the Indians, or their wives as slaves, should be fined double the value of the articles and be obliged to return them; no one must take or buy the children or slaves of free Indians without the written permission of the Commandeur, on pain of a fine of double their value; and slaves sent to trade must have passes, which might be obtained free from the post-holders, on pain of a fine of 100 rix dollars.

It will be seen from the last extract that the Judicial Council was something more than a Court of Justice. By this time (1735-6) a sort of Burgher Militia had been organised, but it was not until many years afterwards that it attained to any degree of efficiency. Although the Council was composed entirely of servants of the Company, most of its members, including the Commandeur, had private estates, and therefore in many cases acted for their own interests as well as for those of the other colonists. This is well shown in the proceedings of May 6th, 1737.

The Commandeur reported having written to the Company in regard to rumours of a probable war with France. The colony was not in a fit state to defend itself without reinforcements of soldiers, and small vessels from Martinique could easily come into the river. He could man the new fort, but this would not prevent an enemy passing through the other channels. The Company had promised help, but he wanted to find out how far the inhabitants would be willing to assist.

The members of the Council said they were willing to do their best, but they wanted to know how much would be contributed by the Company. Every one should pay for the defence of his property according to his circumstances. A number of men could be procured at eight guilders a

month, besides their food, clothing and ammunition, the expense of which might be paid by an extraordinary tax of one Flemish pound on each slave, beyond the usual impost of one rix dollar. They thought that the servants of the Company, whether slaves or not, should also be included in this assessment.

It was finally resolved, that in case of war, all the Company's servants who had estates, as well as all the private inhabitants, should pay an extra head tax of four guilders, on all slaves, including infants, to be settled by good bills of exchange before the vessel that brought the supplies left the colony. This, the Council thought, might be done, if the Company did their part, but they could not vouch for certain estate owners who were living at Middelburg because they had not been consulted. It must be stipulated that this tax was only to last as long as their High Mightinesses were at war with France.

It is evident from the above that this Council was not only a Civil and Criminal Court, but also a Legislative Assembly, and that the Dutch system of referring questions for approbation to the parties concerned, had already been introduced into Essequibo. It is doubly interesting also as showing how what was afterwards known as the Colony *Ongeld* and Colony Taxes,* arose. As no war took place at this time the extra tax was not required, but later it became one of the institutions of the colony, the Burgher Officers and even individual planters being consulted before a new impost was ordered.

The Council of Justice even appears to have been concerned in the first land grants, although later these were always made by the Council of Policy. On the 24th of June, 1739, ABRAHAM PHILIPUS HERAUT was permitted to occupy and possess a piece of land, from the point called Negro

* This is the foundation of all the rights of the Financial Representatives to deliberate on the appropriation of the Colonial Taxes.

Cop, beyond the creek called Barbecasse, on condition that he allowed the manager of Plantation Duynenburg to open up a new cane field thereon if he wished to do so. He was not to sell or dispose of it in any manner without the consent of the Company, but must cultivate and plant it with such things as would be most advantageous to him, and further, build a proper house upon it, to the satisfaction of the Council. When a Land Surveyor should arrive a plan would have to be made and deposited with the Secretary. Finally, he must do nothing to the prejudice of the Indians or traders, and allow the Company to cut what wood they might require.

The conditions of other grants were similar, the principal points being, that the land was to be planted and a house built, and that the estate must not be alienated without permission. Nothing is said of an acreage tax, this being one of the imposts which the Company vainly tried to enforce, not being able to do so in opposition to the private planters. Up to 1752, when BERCHEYCK the Surveyor arrived, the grants were made subject to revisal, in most cases not even containing the number of acres or any boundary, except perhaps that it was situated above or below a certain creek.

Since GELSKERKE had assumed the administration of the colony, some of the restrictions of the Chamber of Zeeland had been relaxed, or allowed to remain in abeyance. The result of this was, that English vessels were allowed to enter the river, provided they brought horses or mules. The same rule was applied here as in Surinam; without a certain number of horses in proportion to the tonnage of the vessel, she would not be admitted, while if the horses died on the voyage, the salted heads were to be produced as evidence of good faith. It was illegal to ship sugar or cotton by these vessels, but molasses, fire-wood and kill-devil (rum), might be exported, and it may be supposed

that the free planters were not very strict in regard to the other things.

The great difficulty was how to get enough negro slaves. Later, Essequibo was called a "slave-starved" colony, for, while Surinam was able to procure as many as she wished, very few were sent to the Company's own settlement. It is true that they might be bought in Surinam, and it may be presumed that some of the planters went there to buy, but it was not so convenient, while the facilities for credit would be wanting. On this account Indians were utilised as far as possible, and cases were continually being brought before the Council where disputes arose as to their ownership. The Dutch have been stigmatised for cruelty to their slaves, but it must be remembered that the age was a rough one, in which the weak suffered under the tyranny of place and power. Children were beaten most cruelly, soldiers and sailors flogged, beasts of burden worked to death, and the peasantry in most European countries kept in ignorance and subjection. As far as can be gleaned, there were no special slave laws in Essequibo at this time, nor does it appear that they were ill-treated. The following "Instructions to Managers, officers and overseers, to be observed on sugar and coffee plantations, &c." taken from a Description of Surinam,* show the best side of the slavery question, and no doubt these were carried out on the majority of estates:—

"The main thing to be looked after is, that the plantation be supplied with abundance of plantains, cassava, &c., according to the number of the people. This will be not only for the benefit of the estate, but absolutely necessary for its preservation, for when there is no want of provisions, and the servants and slaves obtain proper nourishment, good work can be demanded of them, whereas without this nothing but trouble and difficulty can be expected, tending to the serious damage if not ruin of the plantation.

* *Beschryving van de Colonie van Suriname door Thomas Pistorius; 1763.*

"It tends not only to the prosperity of the estate, but also to the preservation of order, if there be no obvious favouritism in the governing of slaves, as the favouring of one above another may cause oppression to the innocent, and discourage them. If it is desirable to reward any of them for diligence or watchfulness, the planter must take great care that it is not perceived by the others, so as to prevent jealousy, which leads to disputes and difficulties.

"Their good conduct need not however be left unrewarded, while punishment must be inflicted as little as possible. In case the latter may be necessary, the planter must deal with them more in mercy than with severity, and not let the punishment exceed the offense, nor should he inflict chastisement in anger, but rather pardon them, judging according to their characters, whether good or bad; forgiveness being often found to have a far better effect than punishment. Moreover, care must be taken that the black drivers are kept well in hand and supported in their authority.

"It not only concerns Christian charity, but also civil law, to help even our enemies in need and sickness, and, as far as our means allow, to afford necessary refreshment and support, how much then is it not also necessary to do the same for those, who, by their services, endeavour to increase our revenues and wealth. It is therefore the duty of those to whom the management of slaves is entrusted, to take care of them with kindly hearts when they are sick and unable to perform any more labour, and to provide things necessary to refresh as well as cure them. It is quite certain that amongst slaves who are treated in this friendly manner by their masters, there must necessarily follow great affection, which is shown by greater trust, carefulness and diligence. The same follows also from a more kindly treatment of their children.

"If a superintendent or overseer be appointed, it is generally impolitic to give direct orders to the slaves, and it is especially necessary to be careful when they are in drink, remembering that they are generally a most ignorant race. and at such times ready to be unruly and malicious. One has to manage them very carefully so as to induce them by gentle means to perform their duties, if he does not want to cause great difficulties, disputes, discord, or even murder. These results of want of care have often caused the ruin of plantations, therefore one ought to proceed very cautiously, and rather give the head men and the most sensible of the others, small presents or promises of advancement, in order to keep them from drinking, and so, by putting good examples before the others, help to keep them in order.

"For the masters' benefit it is the duty of all those who are placed in charge of the negroes to take very great care that those who have hurt

themselves by being cut or bruised, have their wounds carefully dressed, also they must attend to those who have ulcers on the legs,—caused by worms boring into the toes and thence into the feet—who by want of care may become crippled and unable to perform their work. These worms, which are unknown in Europe, must be extracted by a very skilful hand, and the feet put into a mixture of lime-juice and salt which soon cures them. Every reasonable person will agree with me that we cannot expect the same amount of work from a cripple, or one who has been wounded, that we should from a healthy person, particular care should therefore be taken to give speedy assistance in such cases, so that the planters' interest be not injured.

“The negro driver, whose duty it is to superintend the work of the slaves, must pay particular attention to the lazy and dirty, and try by fair words to induce the former to greater diligence. He must especially prevent them neglecting their own persons, as from filth and dirt come diseases which have often caused serious loss to the planters.

“According to the number of slaves and servants, a supply of medicines must be provided, including salves, balsams, and such other things as may be necessary to restore the sick and cure the wounded. When this is neglected, and medicines have to be fetched from a distance, it often happens that the diseases penetrate too far into the blood, while the wounds become so bad that restoration is very difficult.

“Care must be taken that the slaves be provided with good, close, dry and convenient houses, so that they may not get sick through exposure to damp, and thus be unable to work for the master's benefit.

“It is necessary that the plantation should always be supplied with horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, &c., it is therefore the duty of those to whom these animals are entrusted, to see as far as possible that they be not neglected or allowed to become diseased, so that the slaves after their work is done may suffer no lack of meat, or compelled to eat salt beef, which is very prejudicial to their health.

“The proverb says, ‘the master's eye fattens the horse;’ whoever takes note of this will find out its truth. Those therefore who have the care of plantations, will I trust, not think it wrong of me to tell them that they ought to be continually on the move, if they wish to have things properly done and avoid damage. They must look after the buildings, so that they may be preserved from wood ants, and the slaves protected from wind and rain, and see that there are no shingles or tiles loose or wanting. In case of damage, this should be immediately repaired, to prevent the greater expense caused by neglect. Further, they must examine the sluices as well as the large and small boats, see that they are kept in good order and prevented from rotting through

dirt, and that they are painted at least once in six months, without which they will soon be useless through worms. There are many other little things to be provided for continually if a person wishes to preserve his own interests and prevent damage. Whoever has appreciated the abovementioned proverb will also admit that 'he who deals with the cow must hold her by the horns.'

"Those who have learnt from experience will I trust agree with me that one ought never (even if he had hundreds of slaves) to separate them to different jobs, for when this is done the work is never properly performed, it being so to speak like 'jumping from the cow to the donkey.' However, exceptions may be made sometimes, as for instance, when the land has to be dug, or the forest to be cut down; these are more suitable for men than the more feeble women. In such cases the men only are sent out, while the women in the meanwhile must be set to do something else, which is less difficult and more suited to their constitutions. In other cases, when the whole gang is put upon one job, they should not be taken off till the work is entirely finished. 'Don't put off until tomorrow, what can be done to-day, for he who always expects to be ready in time is always too late.'

"'Good work requires good tools,' is an old saying, which experience has well verified, therefore, if a planter desires good and quick work from his people, he must take care that the slaves are provided with the best implements. The men must have good axes, trimming knives, cutlasses, shovels, &c., and the women good hoes, &c. An inspection of tools should take place every six months, when those that are found unfit for use must be condemned, and replaced by new ones. This occasion will also be suitable for a careful examination of the slaves themselves, to give prizes to the most deserving, and punish or reprimand those found to have been lazy, slovenly and disobedient. The iron pots should also receive a searching examination, and the damaged ones be replaced, otherwise the slaves will roast their food, which causes sickness, that does not occur when meat is properly stewed.

"To prevent disturbance and rioting, it is necessary that the stores and rations, such as hats, shirts, tobacco, pipes, macarel, cod-fish and fish-hooks, be regularly distributed, also salt once a month, the quantities to be left to the judgment of the planter.

"To a young beginner without much experience, it will be useful to know the exact number of slaves required to cultivate a given quantity of land. For a hundred acres of canes and twenty of provisions, you will require 35 or 40 hands, besides a driver, and cooper and carpenter slaves, who together will be found sufficient to work the estate; the same rule may be applied when the acreage is higher or lower. In the

case of coffee estates, having thirty thousand trees, covering 50 or 60 acres, and the same twenty of provisions, forty slaves will be required, besides the driver &c., but after the crop is gathered thirty will be sufficient.

“ Acting like Christians and keeping our consciences clear, we are as such bound to see that the slaves (who are human like ourselves and have the same Almighty as their Creator, although it has not yet pleased Him to enlighten them with the Holy Gospel truth,) are treated as human beings, and not compelled to do more work than they can bear, or what is beyond their strength and age. A young and weak male, or a female, cannot be expected to labour like a strong man. Judgment is required in such cases, otherwise there may be cause for regret afterwards, especially in the case of breeding women and those suffering from different complaints.

“ The bow cannot be kept always strung, therefore the slaves should be allowed four holidays a year—days set apart, on which, with drums and flutes, they may jump and caper to their hearts' content. During these times some extra allowances of food and drink should be provided, under strict orders however, that they conduct themselves properly, without quarreling or making a disturbance. It is also necessary that they be supplied with rum during the rainy season, to warm and refresh their bodies; this can be given every second or third day, in jugs or bottles according to their number.

“ In conclusion, if a qualified, energetic and vigilant manager pays attention to the foregoing hints, I am quite certain that he will be benefited, and receive well-merited recognition from his employer, who reaps the advantage. They have been written by an old experienced planter, who, for upwards of forty years personally superintended the governing of slaves, preparing land, planting, and everything connected with the cultivation of an estate. He has himself experienced favourable results from carrying out these rules faithfully, and therefore feels confident that those who follow closely in his footsteps, will ultimately find their labours crowned with success.”

CHAPTER IV.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BERBICE ASSOCIATION, 1714—1733.

The Van Hoorns Company wanting more capital—Prospectus of Berbice Association—Inventory of effects of the proprietors—Difficulty in disposing of shares—Association established—Simon Abrahams searches for gold and silver—New plantations to be made—Coffee introduced from Surinam—West India Company claims supremacy—Brickery erected—Application to States General for a Charter—Articles of Charter—Immigration from the Netherlands—Commandeur Tierens dismissed and Governor Waterham appointed—Instructions to new Governor.

DURING the six years from 1714 to 1720, Berbice continued under the control of the Van Hoorns Company, but the profits were very small, and altogether unsatisfactory to the shareholders. The capital was not sufficient to put the colony on a sound basis, it being all required to repair the damage and loss from the raid of the Privateers and subsequent partial abandonment of the plantations. Like all the old trading Companies the VAN HOORNS wanted profit at once, and grumbled very much when the Commandeur told them that he could do little without a proper supply of slaves and stores. At last, in 1720, it was decided to raise more capital by establishing a new joint-stock Company, of which the following was the Prospectus:—

ASSOCIATION OF THE OWNERS OF THE COLONY OF BERBICE.

“The Colony named Berbice, lying on the great coast of America, in the latitude of six degrees north of the Line, between Surinam and Essequibo, is admirably situated, and the soil very suitable for the

cultivation of the Sugar Cane, as is confirmed by the experience of several years, and the actual existence of six large sugar plantations in perfect order. Besides this, the Cacao grown there possesses a very fine flavour, and there are already two plantations under this cultivation; the nature of the soil has also been found suitable for indigo, so that a few samples of first-rate quality have been brought here; further the planting of coffee, to all appearance, might be undertaken with every prospect of success, while the trade in anatto and cotton has, since the first establishment of the colony, been the principal object of its possessors; and again, from its situation, it is certain that minerals are not wanting. Therefore we, the present owners of the said colony Messrs. NICOLAAS and HENDRIK VAN HOORN, for themselves, and as acting on behalf of Mr. CORNELIS VAN PERE of West Souburg, MARIA LUYKEN, widow of ARNOLDUS DIX and his heiress, and PIETER SCHUURMAN, being willing to continue and increase the forementioned cultivations of sugar and cacao, to lay out plantations of coffee and indigo, and, if possible, discover the minerals that probably will be found there; but finding the funds necessary for this purpose to be considerable, on account of the cost of slaves and ships, by which the forementioned products are to be obtained and transported to this country, also for the erection of a new fort, by which the quiet possession and future safety of the colony will be secured, as well as the profits, against the attacks of enemies, we have, after mature consideration, agreed and resolved to accept additional shareholders, and to admit so many others, as that, with them and ourselves, we may obtain and furnish a sum of three million two hundred thousand guilders, *Hollands Banco-geld*, in the manner following:—

“This capital of f3,200,000 shall be divided into sixteen hundred parts or shares, of two thousand guilders each, and each shareholder shall be the owner of such portion or share as shall stand against his signature, and make payment thereof and otherwise regulate himself according to the aftermentioned conditions, and no further shares shall be issued. The capital thus furnished shall only be used, with energy and perseverance, to carry on the said plantations of sugar and cacao, to plant coffee and indigo, and further, to do everything possible to serve, benefit, and increase the welfare of those interested therein.

“The conditions by which the shareholders will be bound are as follows:—

1. Firstly, there shall be paid to the present owners and participators in the colony, for their plantations and cultivations, with all that pertains thereto, together with all their privileges, under which they have accepted and possessed it, nothing excepted, in accordance with the inventory hereby annexed, the sum of eight hundred thousand guilders,

and that at different times, as hereafter explained in Article 21, all in *Banco*.

2. The present owners of the colony will, on their part, be bound to liquidate all claims for salaries and emoluments of officers, master-planters, workmen, sailors and soldiers, up to the 16th of March 1720 last, when the Account books of the Colony were closed, so that commencing from the aforesaid date, which date is mentioned in the inventory, all the new charges and expenses will be placed to the account of the new shareholders, and the colony will be considered as being worked at their risk and profit.

3. The balance found by the books to have been due to the colonists on the 16th of March shall be assumed by the new shareholders as their own debt, but the amount thereof shall be refunded to them by the old proprietors.

4. The present owners shall, by preference, be entitled to four hundred shares in the new Company, each of the value of two thousand guilders, and as many more as may be allotted to them.

5. Of the £3,200,000 capital, there shall be paid on account, fifty per cent., in eight instalments as follows:

1720,	First November,	eight per cent. of the whole	£	256,000
1721,	" April	" " "	£	256,000
"	" October	ten " "	£	320,000
1722,	" April	eight " "	£	256,000
"	" October	four " "	£	128,000
1723,	" April	" " "	£	128,000
"	" October	" " "	£	128,000
1724,	" April	" " "	£	128,000

Total :—fifty per cent. £1,600,000

6. Whoever has failed to pay his instalment in full within one month after it has become due, shall forfeit his shares, and the same shall be sold for the benefit of the general shareholders.

7. No further instalments beyond the fifty per cent. shall be exacted except by Resolution and consent of the Directors and chief shareholders and by majority of votes.

8. For the proper administration of all the business of the colony, an office shall be opened in the town of Amsterdam, and seven Directors shall be elected by majority of votes, to decide what shall or shall not be done, of which number shall be Messrs. NICOLAAS VAN HOORN and PIETER SCHUURMAN; it shall also be permitted to Mr. HENDRIK VAN HOORN, to attend all the meetings, and, in the absence of his brother, to sit as a Director, but when both attend together only one vote will be counted; in case of death the surviving brother will succeed.

9. The other five Directors shall be experienced merchants, elected from the chief shareholders by majority of votes, and in case of a death, the vacancy shall be filled by another experienced merchant within one month.

10. No one shall be entitled to be a Director unless he possesses ten shares in the colony, and he must continue to hold them as long as he is on the Directorate.

11. The Directors shall hold office for life, except in unforeseen cases when they may become disqualified, or if during a whole year anyone should be absent from all the meetings, under such circumstances others will be chosen in their places by majority vote as in Article nine.

12. The Directors shall appoint all the necessary servants.

13. The chief shareholders, shall be considered as those holding ten shares, but no one shall have more than one vote, although he may have a greater interest.

14. For the first four years the Directors shall receive no salary except a gratuity of two hundred guilders annually, but when profits are divided they shall be entitled to five per cent. of these.

15. The Directors shall close the books annually and have them balanced; all the chief shareholders will be permitted to attend the meeting, and two or three of them shall be appointed to examine the accounts when the annual reckoning takes place.

16. The capital of £3,200,000 may be increased or doubled, but not without the consent of the chief shareholders, by majority vote, and under such conditions and at such times as they may consider necessary.

17. The Directors shall have the power to pay dividends, and to limit their amount, when they consider proper or advisable.

18. It is expressly stipulated, that no shareholder shall be allowed to carry on any inflated speculations, (wind negotie) or premium dealings, (premie negotie) but should any one wish to sell or transfer his shares, such transaction shall be for cash, and a fee of two guilders for each transfer, shall be exacted, and placed to credit of the general account.

19. The new shareholders shall carry out the contract, entered into by the old proprietors, with one SIMON ABRAHAM, with regard to the searching for minerals, he having already arrived in the colony, a copy of the said contract being annexed hereto for the information of those concerned.

20. Should it be found necessary in the future, to alter any of these conditions, or to amplify them, for the benefit or profit of the colony, this shall be done with the consent and after the deliberation of the Directors and chief shareholders, by majority vote.

21. The compensation or payment to the old proprietors for the colony and all its possessions and dependencies, according to the inventory, shall be £800,000, as in the first Article, to be paid at the times and in instalments as follows:—

1720,	First of November	to be written off in " Banco "	£180,000	
1721,	"	April	"	120,000
"	"	October	"	120,000
1722,	"	April	"	160,000
"	"	October	"	80,000
1723,	"	April	"	64,000
"	"	October	"	40,000
1724,	"	April	"	36,000

Total £800,000

22. No one shall be allowed to take less than three, nor more than ten shares."

The inventory attached showed that there were then in Berbice belonging to its proprietors, six sugar plantations, Ooster Souberg, Markay, Peereboom, Nieuw Vliessengen, Wester Souberg and De Hoofd, and two cocoa estates, Den Bergh and Sampson, with all their buildings and appurtenances. There was a great fort (Fort Nassau), and a guard-house (Redoubt Sampson) situated about midway between the fort and the mouth of the river, also a redoubt opposite the fort, besides which there were four outlying posts in the interior. On all the plantations, &c., there were 895 slaves of all ages, and the forts and posts were armed with sixty large and small guns, 18, 12 and 8 pounders, and other small ordnance, with muskets and necessary ammunition. Besides these there was a cedar church at the mouth of the Wieronie creek, a smithy outside the fort, furnished with iron, steel, coal and other necessaries, and a bark and other vessels such as corials, canoes, yachts and punts, with all their belongings. Then came the stores at the fort and posts, provisions, medicines, copper-work and other goods, the moveables and house furnishings of the fort, and cash in the chest amounting to

about four or five hundred guilders. There were 524 head of cattle, besides sheep, pigs, &c., and 281 horses, a fly-boat lying at the wharf, and the produce in the fields and stores, calculated as amounting in March 1721, to 700 hhds. of sugar, besides cacao, anatto, &c. Finally, there was a new decked vessel, (hekboot) on her first voyage since May the 7th last, worth with all her fittings, cargo, provisions and stores for the colony, about £35,000, and her cargo homewards, consisting of 800 to 850 hhds. of sugar besides other produce.

The new Company made little impression on the Amsterdam money market. Of the 1,200 shares open to the public only 941 were subscribed for, the remainder being left on hand, while the instalments were paid so slowly that instead of fifty per cent. being received in 1724, only forty two per cent. was actually paid, and that not until 1732. Of course the original proprietors suffered, being obliged to remain content with three-fourths of the price agreed upon.

However, the Berbice Association (Societat) was established and the Directors chosen, who were NICOLAAS or HENDRIK VAN HOORN, PIETER SCHUURMAN, DIRK VAN DER MEER, DIEDERIK VAN BUUREN, GEORGE BRUIN, JACOB VOORDAGH and JEAN LUCAS PELS. On the 4th of October, 1720, the first meeting took place, when certain regulations were passed. It was agreed that the president should be changed every two months, and that the duties of Secretary be performed in rotation by each of the Directors. A house in Amsterdam was to be hired for the purpose of holding the meetings, and for use as an exchange, where the produce of the colony might be sold. It was also resolved that twenty five to thirty shares be placed on the London market, so as to create an interest in the colony among the English, and that the West India Company be asked to import 400 to 450 slaves at once, and other cargoes later. Although

this was the time of the great companies, the Mississippi scheme, the South Sea bubble, and hundreds of others, there does not appear to have been any demand for Berbice stock in London, so that the colony never received any attention either from English capitalists or planters during this period.

The miner, SIMON ABRAHAMS, referred to in the Prospectus, was a Jew, who had received permission to search for gold and silver in the interior the previous year. In 1720, he made an expedition into the interior, accompanied by three planters named, VAN DOORN, WILLEM LOUWE, and "DE JONGE VAN DAMME," with a number of Indians. Whether ABRAHAMS found traces of gold or not is uncertain, but the expedition returned after a short journey without anything valuable. The Directors evidently expected something better, as they wrote to the Commandeur on the 13th of December, 1722, that they thought if an expedition went beyond the falls, Lake Parima would be discovered. If any enterprising person would dare to explore the forest beyond the mountains, they had no doubt that some valuable discovery in the shape of gold, silver or other minerals, or articles of trade, might be made. Another expedition was sent out, but like the first, it returned without making any important discovery ; the project was therefore abandoned, and ABRAHAMS returned to the Netherlands in 1724.

On the 14th of December, 1720, the Directors wrote to Commandeur TIERENS, informing him of the change of ownership. He was ordered to apply himself with all diligence to the opening out of eight or ten new sugar plantations, for which purpose twelve hundred slaves would shortly be sent to the colony. At the same time he must increase the cultivation of cacao, begin planting indigo and cotton, and be particularly energetic in growing coffee. The last article was then new to Guiana ; it had been intro-

duced into Surinam two or three years before, and from thence a few plants had been lately brought to Berbice. On the same date the Directors wrote to JEAN COUTIER the Governor of Surinam, asking him to send a boat load of coffee beans in the husk to Berbice, the expenses of which they would willingly pay. COUTIER did all he could to oblige them, so that coffee plantations were established without much trouble and became later of considerable importance to the colony. For his kindness in this matter COUTIER was presented by the Directors with a fine saddle horse.

The change in the ownership of Berbice had not escaped the attention of the West India Company. On the 23rd of March, 1721, the Company informed the Directors that it still considered the colony as under its supremacy, and demanded three hundred guilders for the voyage of each vessel, as agreed upon in 1714. Against this the Berbice Association protested, stating that when the colony was taken by the French privateers, all the rights of the Company had lapsed, and when bought by the VAN HOORNS, Berbice was entirely free and independent. A great deal was said on both sides, and the dispute would probably have remained unsettled, if it had not been for the necessity of getting slaves. This need being urgent, the Berbice Association gave up their point in 1730, agreeing to pay the £300, provided the Company supplied slaves at reasonable prices.

The new plantations, Johanna, Cornelia Jacoba, Savonette, Hardenbroek, Dageraad, Hogelande, Elizabeth and Debora, were commenced in 1722, and the coffee plants succeeded so admirably, that the prospects of Berbice were much improved. A brickery was also established near Fort Nassau, so that the foundations of houses and mills could be built to better advantage. Fort Nassau being out of repair, a new fort was projected near the mouth of the river, but this remained only as a project for many years. Trading expeditions were

sent to the Orinoco, but without much success on account of the opposition of the Spaniards; the West India Company also made objections that these were infringements of its rights and privileges.

In 1731 the Berbice Association petitioned the States General for a Charter, so that their rights might be secured against any contingency such as the refusal of the Company to continue the grant, which might happen at any time. Of course this did not please the Ten, who strenuously opposed it as being an infringement of their rights. After a great deal of discussion it was finally agreed between the Company and the Association that all claims of the former should be compounded for an annual payment of six hundred guilders. This being settled on the 27th of September, 1732, the Directors of Berbice pushed on their application to the States General, and on the 6th of December following an Octrooy or Charter was passed, which reads as follows* :—

“ Charter or Conditions whereby their High Mightinesses the States General and the Directors of the Colony of Berbice have agreed to establish Free Trade and Navigation to that Colony, to be open to all the Inhabitants of these Territories, and also to grant land, either cultivated or not, on reasonable conditions.”

“ The States General of the United Netherlands to all those who shall see, hear or read this, greeting; be it known that we have received the petition presented to us in the name and on behalf of the Directors of the Colony of Berbice, asking us to grant them a Charter, so that, under certain conditions, the trade and navigation to the said Colony may be open to all the inhabitants of these territories, also to such as may apply, that as much land, cultivated or not, may be granted as they shall require, in accordance with certain projected regulations, supplied to us and here inserted.

PROJECTED REGULATIONS.

1. It shall be permitted to the Directors of Berbice, under the Sovereignty of their High Mightinesses and their patronage and protection,

* Octrooy of Condition &c. Amsterdam, door ordre van de Ed. Achth. Directeuren van de Colonie de Berbice.

to grant lands to particular persons on such conditions as may be arranged between the contracting parties.

2. The Directors shall be permitted to collect an annual head-tax of fifty pounds of sugar for each inhabitant living in the colony, white as well as black, also a customs duty of two and a half per cent. of the value of all goods, imported to, or exported from the colony, and a tonnage duty on all vessels entering or clearing, of three guilders per last, (4,000 lbs.) to be paid at the place where the ship enters or clears.

3. The Directors shall not be allowed to impose any other taxes during the first ten years, nor even afterwards, without the consent of their High Mightinesses and on application of the Governor and Council.

4. The Directors shall, besides the fort or forts already established, be bound to make, within a reasonable time, upon the so-called Crab Island, or a little higher up the river, a suitable fort to guard the colony, and at their own cost to maintain the same, also to provide the guns and ammunition of war, as well as the pay and maintenance of the garrison and everything connected with the defence and protection of the aforementioned colony, they being entitled in compensation for this to receive an extraordinary head-tax of such an amount yearly as shall be agreed upon with the planters and inhabitants, or otherwise by their High Mightinesses on the information of the colonists, of what shall have been found just.

5. The Directors shall, being requested by the colonists, provide them with a qualified Minister, schoolmaster, choir-leader and the like, without being bound to furnish more than the free table of the Commandant for the minister, an anker of brandy, and half a hogshead of wine; everything beyond these being defrayed by the colonists.

6. The Colonists shall be bound to have one white man to every fifteen negroes, but they will only be required to pay for passage and board of each white person, whether introduced by themselves, or by the Directors at their request, the sum of thirty guilders; these persons will be forwarded from here by the first opportunity and be of such condition, profession or trade, as may be directed by the colonists.

7. All sugar or other produce, sold or exported, even that which may be damaged, will have to be passed through the customs, and will be valued by one or more assayers appointed by the Directors, and these assayers shall be bound to place on the sugars and other produce, the marks of the plantations from which they have been procured.

8. The Colonists shall not be allowed to import or buy slaves from any one, whosoever he may be, except from the West India Company, and through the medium of the Directors of this colony, and they shall,

from time to time, inform the Directors what number of negroes each will require.

The Directors, have already arranged with the West India Company, that on the first requisition they will furnish them with such slaves as they require; these will be sold by public auction in the colony at such prices as would be realised in Surinam.

9. The Colonists shall, at all times, be allowed to sell their plantations, slaves, animals and other effects, or to leave the colony and take these with them to any other place they think desirable.

10. All produce grown in this colony, such as sugar, coffee, cacao, indigo or others, shall not be delivered or exported otherwise than to these territories.

11. Also, the trade and navigation of this colony generally shall not be permitted otherwise than to and from these territories, and that direct, without calling at other places.

12. Under the conditions aforesaid the trade and navigation of the aforementioned colony has by these been opened to all inhabitants of this state.

13. It must be well understood that all Captains wishing to go to the said colony shall be bound to procure from the Directors a Commission or Pass, and to furnish security that they will return with their ships and cargoes to these territories, without calling, in either going or returning, at any other places, except in cases of very great necessity, or danger to the ship and goods, to be verified on their return by authenticated declarations from the place where, for the above reasons, they have been compelled to enter.

14. All Captains going to the Colony will be required on the order of the Directors, to each carry twelve persons as passengers, and convey them to the Colony, two children under twelve years being counted as one, at thirty guilders per head, no extra charge being allowed for either passage or board.

15. Otherwise than as aforesaid, the ships of the Directors, as well as those of the West India Company which have brought slaves, shall have no preference over the vessels of private parties, all being expedited without distinction, and not obliged to wait for the loading of either the ships of the Directors or those of the West India Company.

16. The Captains or Merchants having arrived in the colony with their ships and goods, will be allowed to lay at such places as may be most convenient to them, provided they do not cause an obstruction, or prejudice any one.

17. Until the tonnage dues are paid, that is the export duty on the clearing of the ships and the import duty on those coming from home, it shall not be permitted to discharge any goods, and further, nothing is

to be discharged until permits are obtained, if for the outgoing ships, from the Governor and Councillors in the colony, and for the home coming ships from the Directors, or those authorised by them.

18. For the abovementioned ships and goods, in either going or coming, no territorial export or import duties will be payable.

19. The aforesaid colony shall be administered by a Governor and Council of Government, (*RAAD VAN REGERING*) together with a Council of Justice, under such regulations and form of oath as their High Mightinesses may think proper to publish.

20. The Governor shall be appointed by the Directors, but his Commission must be received from their High Mightinesses, before whom also he must take the oath.

21. The Council of Government shall provisionally consist of, besides the Governor, (six) persons, to be chosen by the Governor from a double number of names submitted to him, for the first time by all the Colonists, and afterwards by the other Councillors.

22. The Governor, in all matters, civil or military, shall have the supreme control, and preside in the Council of Government, but the Governor and Councillors shall at all times be bound to obey and carry out whatever may be ordered or instructed by the Directors; in all other matters where the Governor and Councillors have received no special instructions or orders, the Governor, when this is of any importance, shall convene the Council, who shall deliberate upon it and finally come to such a decision as may be considered desirable or necessary, by majority of votes.

23. It must be well understood on one side, that neither the Governor nor the Council, together or separately, can make or introduce, much less execute, anything contrary to the tenour of this Charter, or any article of it, but on the other side, under this prohibition, and not obstructing the course of affairs, there will be no objection to a few small moderate taxes being fixed by the Governor and Council, with the approval of the Directors, so as to provide certain necessary expenses of the respective Councils of Government and Justice, the schoolmaster, and such like.

24. And, in regard to the Council of Justice, criminal justice shall be discharged by the Governor and Council, but civil justice, by the Governor and six persons, chosen out of a double number from the Council of Government as well as the colonists, by the Governor and Council of Government, to be under the presidency of the Governor.

25. Of the aforesaid six Councillors of Justice, three shall retire every second year, being succeeded by three others, and so on every succeeding two years.

26. In the above-mentioned Council, the majority of votes shall decide all matters, and the Governor shall not have more than one vote, except in cases where the votes are equal, when the Governor shall settle the question.

27. All the forementioned Councillors of Government and Justice, shall perform their duties willingly, without formulating excuses, and without claiming any salary or remuneration.

28. The Councillors of Government shall rank above those of Justice, and in both Colleges the eldest in years shall have priority during the first term, but afterwards he who has sat longest or who first took the oath.

29. To the sentence passed by the Council of Justice, appeals shall be allowed (so far as civil matters are concerned) to their High Mightinesses, in the same manner as is done in Surinam.

30. And, as provision cannot be made too soon, for succession *ab intestato* of the colonists or others who have settled in the colony, freedom will be permitted to all going there to choose, but having chosen, to follow the Charter of the West India Company of these territories granted by their High Mightinesses on the 10th of January, 1661.*

After the above Charter had been granted, the Directors set to work to develop the colony by immigration from the Netherlands. The advantages of Berbice were puffed up in the Dutch newspapers, with the result that small numbers of settlers began to go there. As Commandeur TIERENS was considered not to be quite the sort of man to carry out the new regulations, he was discharged, and on the 24th of March 1733, BERNARD WATERHAM was appointed Governor, on a salary of 1500 guilders per annum with emoluments. A month was occupied in drawing up his Instructions, which were completed on the 23rd of April. A few days later, WATERHAM took his oath before their High Mightinesses, and shortly afterwards departed for Berbice. He had been ordered to tell TIERENS of his dismissal, the reasons being, charges of exaction and his many mistakes. WATERHAM must take from his predecessor a proper account of all cash, stores, &c, but he must do this very judiciously, and if

* The remainder of the document comprises forms of Bond, Passport, and *Act of Vies*, which it is unnecessary to reproduce.

TIERENS gave trouble, or wanted to run away, he was to be arrested and charged with embezzlement.

By the Instructions the Governor was ordered to inspect the colony plantations twice a year, to see if cattle farms could be established so as to lessen the expense of salt provisions, if the plough could be used, if the Surinam method of drying coffee could not be introduced, if Toucoux's process could be established in the sugar factories, and if the Indians could not be induced to grow coffee, cacao, vanilla, &c. He must keep registers of the births and deaths of slaves, enquire into the condition of Fort Nassau, and if necessary, see to the building of another fort, appoint a weigh officer and sugar valuer, and establish an Orphan Chamber. As long as there were no Predicants, he must see that the psalms were sung, the Scriptures read, and other religious services performed, while at the same time he might enquire of the free planters what they would be willing to pay towards the support of a Predicant, School-master, and clerk or choir-leader. Plantation Savonette was to be planted with coffee and cacao at once.

With the Governor went a Land Surveyor, PHILIP MARCUS OSTERLIN, to superintend the paaling and measuring of the new concessions. By the same vessel, nine settlers also embarked for the colony, who had received free grants under the new regulations. The maximum for a coffee plantation was 500 acres, and for sugar 1000 acres, the land being granted free, but with an annual acreage tax. The concessions were to be measured and charted by the Colony Land Surveyor and a breadth of one chain (66 ft.) left between each plantation.

On WATERHAM's arrival he did not find much appearance of progress, and having his work laid out, he busied himself in carrying out the Instructions, with very good results. The Councils of Government and Justice were soon established, the former being apparently composed of the

Governor, Secretary and six master planters, that is managers of the estates of the Association. They were bound by oath to be faithful to the Directors, to enforce the provisions of the Charter, neither to give nor receive presents, and to enforce justice.

CHAPTER V.

ESSEQUEBO OPEN TO ALL NATIONS, 1738—1744.

Laurens Storm van 's Gravesande arrives as Secretary—His report on the condition of the Colony—Troubles with the soldiers—Free planters admitted into the Council of Justice—Business of the Council of Policy—Seat of Government removed to Fort Island—Opening of the colony to all nations—Influx of English planters—Expedition to the interior—Hildebrand arrives to prospect for gold and silver—Slaves revolt against mining—Hildebrand unsuccessful—He is banished for cruelty—Gold-mining in Surinam—Commandeur Gelskerke dies and is succeeded by Gravesande—Trading expedition to the interior—Colony plantations established lower down the river—Illegal trade with the British West Indies—Land speculation—Murder of a Barbadian by his two slaves—West India Company not paying—New institutions—Orphan Chamber—Kiesheers—Church Consistory—Interesting cases in the Council of Justice.

IN every country and in all ages, certain individuals arise who leave their mark for all future periods. They are not generally such as are subservient to authority, but men of strong and independent minds, and as it were, born leaders. Such a man was LAURENS STORM VAN 'S GRAVESANDE, who arrived in Essequibo on the 14th of May, 1738.

The late Secretary, DANIEL USCHNER, having died at Cartabo the previous year, Commandeur GELSKERKE had recommended JAN HAGEMAN, one of the Company's managers and a member of the Council of Policy, for the office. The Directors however, did not agree with him, and wrote on the 6th of January, 1738, informing him that they had

been looking for a suitable person for the vacant post, and it appeared to them they had found such a one in STORM VAN 's GRAVESANDE. Being a well-educated and intelligent man, who had gained considerable experience in military service, and was well-fitted for the office, they had therefore appointed him Secretary and Book-keeper in Rio Essequibo. He had been permitted to take with him his wife and five children, as well as his sister, who, they said, would help to increase the small population of the colony.

He was a gentleman of good family, and, having been born on the 12th of October, 1704, was now in his 34th year. He married in March 1728, LUMEA CONSTANTIA VAN BERGH-EYCK, whose brothers and nephews made that name well-known in the colony a few years later. The family went to Essequibo by way of St. Eustatius, being seventeen weeks on the voyage, and half-starved during the whole time, which GELSKERKE stated in a letter to the Directors, was "very hard for people of fashion."

Notwithstanding the rejection of his nominee for the same office, GELSKERKE received the new Secretary in a most cordial manner, and we soon find him writing to the Directors in most flattering terms of his capability and vigilance. Having both been soldiers, the Commandeur and Secretary became fast friends, working hand in hand for the benefit of the colony, which from this time began to increase in importance wonderfully. By the same vessel that brought GRAVESANDE, arrived a large supply of garrison stores, ammunition and other necessaries, so the vexed question of a new fort might now be considered as finally settled in its favour.

On the 11th of August, GRAVESANDE wrote to the Directors, giving his views on the defences of the colony, which he had personally examined as a military expert. The garrison was weak and the discipline bad, the soldiers being almost naked, while, as for the wooden fort on Great Flag

Island, it could never be of any use as it was, for when new palissades were put up on one side, the others were falling to pieces. A new fort must be built of brick, and if the Directors gave permission he would superintend its erection. In July previous some soldiers deserted from Kyk-over-al on the ground of insufficient rations having been distributed. This, they said, had happened three times; and although they had complained to Mr. HAGEMAN, who promised to bring the matter before the Commandeur, they had obtained no redress. Three of them made an attempt to escape to the Orinoco, in a canoe belonging to the carpenter of the new fort. All the other soldiers knew when the desertion took place, but made no attempt to prevent it. Having been pursued and called upon to surrender, they refused, saying they would rather drown themselves, and when captured tried to kill those who had caught them. They were however brought back, tried, and finally sent to the Netherlands, for punishment.

The Council of Justice then consisted of four members, the Commandeur, Secretary, CORNELIS BOTER and JACOBUS VAN RODEN, all servants of the Company. These were now thought to be insufficient in number, and on the 2nd of January, 1739, the Commandeur informed the members that the Directors had agreed to increase the number to six, one of the two new Councillors to be selected from the free planters. GELSKERKE then nominated JOHAN HENDRICH MUNOX, and the other Councillors asked him to nominate two persons, which having been done, they selected ABRAHAM PHILIPUS HERAUT, who thus became the first Colonial member of the legislature.

This election of a free planter was thought a matter of great importance fifty years afterwards, as the colonists considered it a precedent for a Court of Policy composed of an equal number of planters and officials. Their argument was in effect that the Council had, from the earliest

times, been composed of two sets of members, first, the servants of the Company, and second, Burghers, chosen at first by their fellow citizens, and afterwards by the **KWISHERS**. The Company on its own side, refuted the contention by the fact that this arrangement only applied to the Court of Justice, but the Directors did not say that the first Judicial Council was more allied to a legislative body than that of Policy.

The Minutes of Policy before July 5th, 1744, are missing from the Archives of British Guiana, we can only therefore take those of a later date than the present in describing the duties of that Council, but there can be no doubt that the business of the meetings in 1744 was similar to that of 1739. The meetings were held quarterly, early in January, April, July and October, and the matters considered at them were only those connected with the Company's affairs. The business always commenced with the Manager's quarterly reports; for example, on **Pln. Duyenburg**, there had died, 1 **Macroen negro**, 4 horses, and 9 horned cattle; on **Poelwyk**, 1 **Macroen** and a child; on **Pelgrim**, 2 negro women, 1 invalid and 1 **Macroen**; on the provision ground, 1 creole, 1 negro, 1 Indian and an Indian child; on the indigo plantation, one **Macroen**. Sometimes mention was made of the prospects of the sugar crop for the coming season, or the amount of sugar shipped, but the Minutes are mostly records of land concessions and transports. The Commandeur always read portions of the letters of the Directors, where they contained "Instructions" or Resolutions of the Company, and gave the managers their orders for the succeeding quarter. It will be easily seen from this that the Council of Policy was really a meeting to discuss the Company's business and grant land concessions.

The first meeting of the Council of Justice in the new fort, took place on the 5th October, 1739, and the **Huis**

Naby was then abandoned as the seat of government. This fort was the wooden building, which had taken so long in erection, and which GRAVESANDE said was useless. In September previous he had written again to the Directors, offering to finish a new brick fort to replace it, in the course of two years. If they gave permission he would make the bricks himself, and get lime from Barbados. The Commandeur seconded him and recommended the matter to the Directors, who at last consented. GELSKERKE had been living on Fort Island since January, when his own house had been finished, where he remained to superintend the building of other houses for the Secretary and Predicant, barracks for the soldiers, a workshop, and the Company's warehouse.

The results of this remove soon began to be apparent. Hitherto there had been a few scattered plantations near the mouth of the river, but after the removal of the Government offices, there was a growing tendency among all the planters to vacate the worn-out estates near Kyk-over-al. The development of Essequibo however, would probably have been very slow, had not GELSKERKE and his able Secretary been able to wring from the Directors a concession which was so novel that it amounted to almost a revolution. The feeling in Essequibo had hitherto been in favour of immigration from the fatherland, and especially from Zeeland, but the selfish spirit of monopoly prevented any encouragement to settlers of other nationalities, the difficulties in obtaining the consent of the authorities amounting to a virtual prohibition. It is true that since the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a great many French Huguenots had arrived in the Dutch colonies, especially Surinam, but these were considered as naturalised Dutchmen; now the river Essequibo was opened to all nations, with ten years exemption from head taxes for everyone who took up a new plantation. How the Directors could

have been induced to allow such an innovation can hardly be conceived; that it was not from a sudden conversion to free trade ideas, will be shown later.

The news soon spread through the British West Indies, being carried there by the New England traders. Free land of the best quality for sugar planters, and ten years freedom from taxes, with liberty to bring their slaves and effects, soon brought a fair number of settlers from Barbados, Antigua and other islands, who were cordially welcomed by the energetic Commandeur and his able Secretary. Among the first of these were JAMES DOIG and THOMAS WILSON, the latter an English clergyman from Antigua, who received a large grant on the island of Wakenaam, to establish a sugar plantation, which they afterwards called New Brandenburg. Others obtained grants for cotton and coffee estates, and it is probable that Essequibo would have become more English than Dutch in a few years, if it had not been for the craving for speculation that followed.

GRAVESANDE was busy with the brick fort, but neither he nor GELSKERKE could neglect the trading interests of the Company. They made many endeavours to develop new sources of profit by expeditions into the interior. The Secretary himself explored the Blue Mountains, and went up the Essequibo in search of minerals, where he found what he supposed to be silver ore. Not being able to go very far on account of his duties, an expedition was fitted out under the command of NICOLAS HORTSMAN, a German surgeon, belonging to one of the Company's estates, who with one soldier, and four creoles as interpreters and guides, went up the Essequibo to open new channels for the Indian trade. This was the person met at Para by DE LA CONDAMINE in 1743, when HORTSMAN gave him a sketch map and an extract from his journal. "He says therein, (the journal) that after having traversed many lakes and vast regions, sometimes dragging, and sometimes carrying his

canoe with incredible labour and fatigue, without finding any traces of what he was in search of, he came at last to a river that runs to the south, which carried him into Rio Negro, into which it enters on the north side.* It appears that HORTSMAN went in search of Lake Parima and "El Dorado," and that GRAVESANDE had some belief in the story, but of course, such expeditions did not give any profit, and were therefore discountenanced by the Directors.

The report of GRAVESANDE on the supposed silver ore attracted the attention of the Chamber of Amsterdam, who, with the permission of the Zeeland Chamber, sent a company of miners to Essequibo in 1740, under the command of THOMAS HILDEBRAND. He prospected about the Blue Mountains, in the Massaruni near Caria Island, and up the Cuyuni. Some slaves were supplied from the Company's estates, and under HILDEBRAND's superintendence they commenced trial diggings. The work was however so very arduous for the whites that six of them died in a short time from the exposure. The samples of ore sent to Amsterdam proved very unsatisfactory, but it must have given sufficient encouragement to carry on the search as the work was continued for four years. We have no accounts of the assays, but it may be presumed that gold-bearing quartz must have been found, as it may still be in the same neighbourhood, while the silver ore is yet to be rediscovered.

The slaves employed in mining complained much of the hard labour, which was different from what they had been accustomed to, and also that HILDEBRAND was cruel and exacting. This dissatisfaction caused a great deal of trouble to the colony, and it was only prevented from developing into a continual danger by the tact of the Com-

* Abridgment of Voyage made within the Inland Parts of South America by Mons. De La Condamine. London, 1747.

mandeur and Secretary. On the 25th of May, 1741, thirty-six male and female creole slaves, belonging to Poelwyk and Dnynenburg, having been ordered to work at the diggings in the Cuyuni, made their escape in canoes up that river to an island, which from this circumstance was afterwards called Creole Island. Here they established themselves, built huts and a stockade, and defiantly refused to return. The whole colony was much alarmed at this occurrence, as the settlers knew that if the runaways succeeded in making a stronghold, it would be a continual source of danger to the plantations, as a refuge for other fugitives and a centre from whence raids might be feared. Their defiance went so far that they sent a message by an Indian to the Commandeur, "that if he wished them to return, he and all his people, yes, even all the people of Holland, must come and fetch them; they were not afraid, but would await their coming." GELSKERKE and GRAVES-ANDE were both very anxious to conciliate the runaways, so as to avoid bloodshed, which would certainly be very great if their strong position should be attacked. The Commandeur therefore sent a mulatto named PIETER TOLLENAAR with instructions to persuade them by fair promises to return to the plantations, or to make the best terms possible. After two visits the delegate succeeded in his mission and brought back the fugitives on the 15th of December of the same year, under an agreement that they were not again to be employed in mining.* To encourage the slaves and overcome their distaste for this work, it was decided in 1742, that, when engaged in mining they should be allowed a stiver a day, payable in goods or kiltum (common rum.)

* Hartsinck gives the terms as, that they and their progeny were declared free, provided they worked every alternate month for the Company, and also states that they remained on the island for fifteen years, intermarrying with Indian women. Netscher says this is not correct, but there is probably some confusion here, perhaps there were two cases of desertion confounded with each other.

.. Thus happily ended what might have become a camp of Bush Negroes like those in Surinam. Not being pure negroes, however, they would probably have been less troublesome, and ultimately have become incorporated among the more gentle Indians. GRAVESANDE had a liking for these people; writing to the Directors in 1749 he says :—

“The children of black fathers and red mothers are handsome, and better qualified to learn handicrafts than either pure black or red. For myself I would rather have one of these than two of the others. They are a little more obstinate and high-minded than the others, but this objection is compensated for by their quickness and readiness to understand.”*

Three of the runaways having refused to return with the others, managed to escape up the Cuyuni, intending to proceed to Spanish Guiana. Being determined not to have any Bush Negroes, and to give a lesson to the other slaves, the Commandeur sent information to the friendly Indians, with an offer of ten axes for each fugitive, either dead or alive. As a result of this, on the 2nd of October, 1743, three barbacued right hands were brought to the Commandeur, who ordered them to be nailed to a post as a warning.

The prospecting and mining was still continued, but with the same unsatisfactory results. HILDEBRAND made promises which he could not perform, and fearing to be brought to account for various misdemeanours, he tried to induce the other European miners to desert with him to the Orinoco. They however had too much reason to complain of his behaviour to themselves to think of following him, and having given information to the Commandeur, HILDEBRAND was brought before the Council of Justice on March 9th, 1744, charged with cruelty to his subordinates, and

* The descendants of these people are scattered along the banks of the rivers, and are now called “bovianders.”

sentenced to be banished from the colony. Several of the miners still remained, and on the 3rd of January, 1746, two of them were fined for ill-treating one HENDRIK DE CONING, after which the mining appears to have been abandoned.

It is interesting to note in this connection that in 1742, a Charter was granted to WILLIAM HACK and other persons to prospect in Surinam for gold, silver and other metals and precious stones, for twelve years, with exclusive rights against all others. When the Company found a suitable location, on application to the Governor, a concession would be granted extending ten "hours" in every direction, provided it did not come within 1,600 roods of the farthest plantation. Elaborate provisions were made for the passage from Holland of 500 miners, and their protection against Bush Negroes and Indians, but it does not appear that the project met with any measure of success.

On the 16th of July, 1742, Commandeur GELSKERKE died at Zeelandia, Fort Island. Having been sick for some time previous, he had written to the Directors for leave to resign and return to the Netherlands, but unfortunately he died before the answer arrived. GRAVESANDE naturally succeeded, and was at once provisionally accepted as Commandeur by the Councils. During the five years he had so ably filled the office of Secretary, he tried his best to aid the Commandeur in improving the status of the colony, and in spite of their many disappointments, especially in connection with the trading expeditions and mining, considerable progress had been made, and a foundation laid for further developments.

By Resolution of the Ten on April 13th, 1743, GRAVESANDE was appointed Commandeur of Essequibo. Shortly afterwards, he fitted out an exploring and trading expedition, under one of the Company's managers named ENGELBERT PIEPERSBURG, who took some of the miners

with him to search for gold and silver. On their return they brought nothing but a lot of fables, apparently picked up from the Indians, especially of a wonderful crystal mountain, on the top of which was to be found sulphur and vitriol, and at its base fine seams of silver ore.

Whether any specimens were brought back, does not appear, but it is certain that no profit was obtained. After this second failure of expeditions that were very expensive, GRAVESANDE settled down to the work of developing the true interest of the colony—its agriculture. Plantations Poelwyk and Duynenburg near Cartabo, were now abandoned, and replaced by a new Duynenburg on Fort Island and Agtekerke on Hog Island. On these new estates the yield of sugar was considerably increased, and cotton began to be cultivated. The indigo fields were still kept up, but without much profit, as the managers did not properly understand the manufacture, while the slaves objected to the nasty work of attending to the vats. Coffee and cacao never succeeded well in Essequibo. The coffee bushes looked flourishing and bore one or two moderate crops, but after that hardly any berries were produced. It may be supposed, that having an interest in these articles, the Commandeur tried his very best, but with so little success that a few years later he had to send to Berbice to buy a small supply of coffee for the garrison. The opening up of the coast soon began to tell on the colony, which rapidly developed from a trading post to the nucleus of a thriving settlement. Frequent and large importations of slaves, as in Surinam, were however absolutely necessary, but the Company did not seem to see this. It is true that a fair number were brought by the English planters, but this was done in an illegal manner, probably with the connivance of the Commandeur. Something had to be done. If the Company could only have looked to its best interests it would have sent enough to supply the demand, but the

Directors were too cautious to run any risks although it was their own country. It naturally followed that an English settler went over to Barbados or Antigua, ostensibly to bring his own property, but really to buy new negroes. The Commandeur knew that these breaches of the Regulations were of benefit to the colony, and kept silent, but probably it was not openly allowed. In some cases it was necessary to connive at the trade with the Islands, as without it the colonists would have been half-starved. The progress of this trade may be judged from the fact that a tax was imposed in 1744, on rum and molasses sold to the English, and in the following year on the petition of the inhabitants, vessels of that nationality were allowed to sell provisions by public auction. This trade became of so much importance afterwards that the Directors tried to stop it, but their jealousy only resulted in its being carried on a little more secretly. The English planters brought money and energy to the colony when it was most needed, while the infusion of new blood so altered the condition of things, that whereas in 1740 there were hardly any plantations near the mouth of the Essequibo, five years afterwards it was thought necessary to find land for new settlers in the Demerara.

The free grants of land led to a great deal of speculation, which increased so much a few years later, that an attempt was made to stop it. An English settler would obtain a concession, clear a small spot, build a troolie hut, and then wait for a customer ready to pay for a good location. Even the relatives of the Commandeur dabbled in this sort of thing. In 1744, S. C. VAN BEROHEYOK sold Pln. Athlone for 160 pistoles to ROBERT BURCOMBE of Barbados, and later such transactions became common. This gentleman (one of Mrs. GRAVESANDE's nephews) sat as a councillor of Justice in 1743, but later he more often appeared before the same Council as a defendant.

In September, 1744, the settlement was horrified by the brutal murder of a Barbadian by his two slaves. It appears that WILLIAM SIMPSON and his wife had come to settle in Essequibo, bringing two adult negroes named CUDJOE and QUACCO and a little negro boy. Having obtained a concession he set to work with the help of his slaves and built a troolie house, after which he sent the two men to cut down the forest trees for his plantation. Not having been accustomed to such hard labour in Barbados, they began to work in the slow and slovenly manner so common among slaves when ordered to do what they dislike. One morning the planter put his gun on his shoulder, in hopes of being able to shoot a few parrots or other fowl for dinner, and walked to the clearing to see how the negroes were getting on. Seeing them sitting down (resting, as they called it) he ordered them to get up at once and go on with their task, adding, that if they did not work better he would sell them to a neighbouring Dutchman. This being one of the greatest punishments known to a negro, CUDJOE came behind his master and struck him down with his axe, while QUACCO followed with several blows which killed the planter. They then became somewhat frightened, but at last, seeing the necessity of concealing the crime, they hid the body under a litter of branches among the trees which had been felled. Finally they went down to the river, washed away all traces of blood from their persons, and lingering until evening, slouched home to the mistress, who, being busy, did not notice anything peculiar in their manner. Not so however the little negro, who being more acquainted with the manners of his race, saw at once that something was wrong. As the master did not return, Mrs. SIMPSON asked the two men if they had seen him or knew where he had gone. They replied that "Massa had gone into the bush to shoot parrots." The wife at last became anxious for fear her husband should

have been lost in the forest, and taking up a gun fired it off several times to guide him in returning. Presently the boy came up to her and whispered his suspicions of the men being concerned in his master's absence, from their wild looks when they came home. When further questioned, the villains pretended to be much concerned about the matter and offered to remain in the house for the night to keep her company, but this she would not allow, ordering them back to their own hut. By this time night had fallen and the almost distracted woman went down to the landing to see if she could discern a boat going to one of the neighbouring plantations. While there she saw an Indian paddling up the river to an estate not far distant, and him she hailed, asking that he should tell his master that Mr. SIMPSON had been lost in the bush, and beg him to come and help her. At eleven o'clock at night arrived two gentlemen, the Indian, and some other persons, who, learning how the matter stood, went through the forest blowing a horn, but not finding the missing planter, they at last returned, took the two slaves prisoners, and put them in the stocks. On the following morning the party searched the neighbourhood of the clearing, when the Indian remarked that in going near a fallen tree he had a feeling that a corpse was hidden there. On the place being searched the body was found and brought to the house, where the negroes were confronted with it. Seeing that it was no good to deny it, they confessed their crime, one of them saying "Missie, your God has taken care of you, for we intended to kill you also." They were then sent to Fort Zeelandia and brought before the Council of Justice, where on their own confession they were sentenced to be executed with that cruelty so characteristic of the time. One of them was pinched seven times with red hot tongs, and then burnt alive. To add to the horror of the scene, a heavy shower fell and put out the fire, so that an hour

and a half passed before he died. Like most of the executed negroes, he showed no sign of penitence nor did he flinch from the pain, saying to his mistress, who had come to witness the vengeance of the law, "Missie, is this what you brought me here for?" On account of the delay in the first execution the other was strangled before being burnt.*

The above account may be considered almost unfit for publication, but as a picture of the period, it is true to the life. Perhaps the most horrifying part of it is the widow gloating over the sufferings of her husband's murderers. *O tempora! O mores!*

It was afterwards ascertained that these negroes had been bought at Barbados from under the gallows, on condition of being taken off the island, which HARTSINCK states was a custom of the English. It was therefore resolved that in future no slaves should be admitted into Essequibo unless provided with certificates from the authorities of the places whence they were brought, that they had not been convicted of any grave offences.

At the commencement of the year 1744, the brick fort was advancing towards completion, and the free planters were commanded in July to contribute slave labour, so that it might be the sooner furnished. As a mark of their appreciation of GRAVESANDE's services, the Directors sent him a cask of red wine as a present, which they afterwards repeated several times, when the Commandeur would have been better pleased with an increase of salary.

The Company was not paying any dividends at this time. Having to compete with the English in other than the Dutch colonies, as far as its slave trade was concerned, there was not much profit to be made. The trade in Surinam was carried on under a system of such long credit,

* Hartsinck.

that there were generally outstanding debts for slaves amounting to a million guilders. The necessary expenses of the new fort and plantations in Essequibo were considerable, so that there was hardly any profit from that colony, although the prospects for the future had brightened wonderfully. From 1735 to 1744 there had been no profit to the shareholders, yet in the face of this fact GRAVESANDE managed to carry out his projects. When the mean spirit of the Directors is taken into consideration, and their continual cry for present profit, we are better able to appreciate the man who could overcome such obstacles.

Not satisfied with aiming to improve Essequibo as a source of future profit, GRAVESANDE was far-sighted enough to see the necessity for suitable institutions and laws. Hitherto, although it may be presumed that the laws of Zeeland had been used as precedents, the only binding Ordinances [were the Articled Letter, the Orders and Instructions of the Company and a few Publications of the different Commandeurs. With the increase of population—settlers who could not come under the regulations for the Company's servants—there was urgent necessity for some alteration. With the caution of a Dutchman and his own good sense however, GRAVESANDE tried rather to regulate matters, than by imposing stringent Ordinances, to hinder progress.

One of the new institutions was the Orphan Chamber. This appears to have been modelled on that of Middelburg, consisting of a President, two members, and a griffier (clerk or secretary) appointed by the Council of Justice. The Orphan masters, as they were called, were to look after the affairs of orphans, idiots, the simple, and others who might be placed under their care, to administer their properties and appoint guardians. Later the Chamber took charge of the estates of bankrupts, and others who had left the colony without appointing legal representatives,

but such does not appear to have been contemplated at first.

The Burgher Militia system was now put on a better footing. Although it had always been taken as a matter of course that a citizen should do his best to preserve the Colony against internal enemies such as Indians and revolted slaves, and even if necessary defend it against privateers, there had been no proper system up to the present. It may be said to have originated in 1742 or 1743, and the following year certain regulations were made by the Council of Justice, to provide for the assembling of the inhabitants in case of invasion. It appears that the colony was now divided into an upper and a lower district, with Burgher Officers in each, who acted in a manner as Justices of the Peace, and, in the absence of a police system, even as a sort of rural constables.

Every man who settled in the colony became a citizen or Burgher, and necessarily a member of the Burghery. The Officers appear to have been nominated by their fellow-citizens and appointed by the Council. Since the election of a Colonial Councillor in 1739, these Burgher Officers had been constituted a College of Kiesheers (electors or choosers) to nominate the representatives of the free planters. Whether these electors consulted the wishes of the Burghers generally in making their nomination is not quite certain, but there is evidence that the Councillors themselves consulted them in matters of importance, and it may be presumed that their wishes were respected in this also. The College was established about 1743, the first Councillor elected on its nomination being ABRAHAM VAN DER CRUYSE, who sat in the Council of Justice on the 1st of July of that year, with the Commandeur, the Secretary ADRIAN SPOORS, S. O. VAN BERCHEYCK, JACOBUS VAN RODEN, J. BACKER and JOHN ADAM KEYSER, being seven members, an addition of one more to the previous number.

A Church Consistory was also established about the same time, which on July 5th, 1745, applied to the Council for the one and a half per cent. vendue commission, for the purpose of repairing the Church, which application it was agreed to recommend to the Directors. This was the foundation of the Church and Poor money which is still charged on all auction sales. Commissaries had been appointed in 1744 to settle disputes at vendues, and as there was not yet an official Vendue Master, the Secretary conducted the sales. No public sale could be held by any private person, and as the fees and expenses were very high on small lots, it naturally followed that goods were bought and sold in bulk.

There was no prison in the colony, but if a criminal was sentenced to incarceration he was put under guard at the fort, and compelled to pay for his board. In 1741 an Indian slave was sentenced to work in chains at the new fort; this appears to have been one of the first cases of a punishment well known later as working in the chain gang. A few criminal cases from the Minutes of the Council are worth publishing, and among them the following:—

“On the 1st of September, 1740, it was reported that MARTINUS HOUWERT, the pilot, had absconded on the 23rd of August previously, in the English barquentine *Sarah*, and had taken away his goods, and four negro slaves from the ship *Neptune*. On January 9th, 1741, HOUWERT was summoned to appear before the Council, and in his absence it was resolved that “as MARTINUS HOUWERT, Pilot of this river, has left the colony in a clandestine and rascally manner, and having been summoned, failed to appear, and as such persons ought to be punished severely as examples, he is condemned by these to be banished for ever and have all his goods and chattels confiscated to the West India Company. On April 10th following, it was ordered to be

published that all persons owing money to HOUWERT must pay it to the Secretary within six weeks.

On the 4th of July, 1740, Heer FINET made an application to have a half-Indian woman secured to him as his property. Her name was CATRINA, the child of a white man and an Indian woman, whom he had found deserted by her Indian friends and almost dead from venereal disease, lying under a plantain tree. He had taken charge of her, cured the disease, and she had now lived with him for twenty-seven years. It does not appear that his application was granted, as it was a very difficult question to decide.

On the 9th of January, 1742, Predicant GREVENBROEK brought a charge against a most scandalous woman named JANNETJE REYNDERZE, who, living at Cartabo, enticed the soldiers of Kyk-over-al to her house. She and her sister, (who lived elsewhere) being both *enciente* were ordered to go and live together in another part of the river within six months, and to pay fines of a hundred guilders each.

CHAPTER VI.

FOUNDING OF DEMERARA, 1745—1750.

Land concessions in Demerara—Conditions and first grants—Exports of Essequibo—Gravesande's narrow escape from drowning—Meeting at Fort Zeelandia—Report of Commandeur and Council to the Directors—Hindrances to progress on account of the meanness of the Company—Gravesande wishes to resign, but the Directors refuse to allow it—Alarm of a Spanish invasion—Fort Zeelandia—Land speculation—Produce of the colony—The Demerara Brandwagt—Progress of Demerara—Indian trade falling off—Indian slaves—Punishments of slaves—Offences of white persons—Gravesande obtains leave of absence.

AT the commencement of the year 1745, nearly all the best locations in Essequibo had been granted to settlers, and some of them began to turn their attention to the neighbouring river. GRAVESANDE saw that great benefit would certainly be derived from the extension of the colony, and applied for permission from the Directors to allow plantations in the Demerara, which was granted on the 18th of October, 1745.

Up to this time there had been no settlement beyond the Essequibo, and even the Pomeroon post appears to have been abandoned. There had been a trading post in the Demerara, but whether it was still in existence is doubtful, if so it was probably near the mouth of the river, on the site of what is now the front of Stabroek.

With their usual meanness, the Directors, although willing to allow the opening up of the Demerara, were unprepared to spend any money, and virtually told intending settlers that if they went there, they must do so at

their own risk, as the Company would not bind itself to protect them. Notwithstanding this drawback, however, applications for land began to pour in,—the first concessions being granted by the Council of Policy on the 3rd of April, 1746, as follows :—

2000	acres on Coeleriseraboe Creek to	Andries Pietersen
1000	„ „ Camoeny „ „	Bastian Christiansen
1000	„ „ Moeracoeba „ „	S. G. van der Hayden
1000	„ „ „ „ „	Andries Tholson
1000	„ „ „ „ „	Jan Bertram.

The special condition attached to each was, that “any person not commencing his cultivation within a year and six weeks shall forfeit his land.” Besides this there were the general conditions of the Company, which ran as follows :—

1. The Company shall not be bound to erect any fort or stronghold in Demerara, or pay the expenses of a garrison in that river, until the new colony shall be able to pay the expenses thereof.

2. The planters who have already received the privilege of ten years exemption from taxes on their new estates in Essequibo, shall not again enjoy that freedom in Demerara.

3. The concession for a large sugar plantation shall be 2,000 acres, with a façade of 1,200 roods along the river ; for a small sugar estate a half, and for cacao, coffee and other plantations, 500 acres.

Besides these there was provision made that a piece of land, ten roods wide, extending the whole depth of the plantation, should be left between each concession as a Company's path, so that if at any future time the whole of the front line should be occupied, there would be a highway to further concessions behind. No provision was made for a public road at this time, but later, as the necessity became apparent, first bridle-paths and afterwards carriage roads, were ordered to be made at the expense of the owners.

At the meeting of Policy in July following, other grants were made for estates in the Camoeny, Haweroeny, Tinaboo, and on the river below the Madewyne. It will

be noticed that all these were situated from twenty to fifty miles up the river, and at first sight it seems strange, that after finding the necessity for removing from the neighbourhood of Kyk-over-al, the planters should again commit the error of settling in a similar place. When however it is taken into account that the colonists were still in dread of an invasion, or raids of privateers, and that the Company gave them no protection whatever, the matter can be easily understood. Another point to be mentioned is that the situation near a creek was convenient for the water mills, which on account of the scarcity of horses and mules, was a great consideration to a sugar estate. Possibly also the neighbourhood of Fort Nassau in Berbice may have given a feeling of security, as the Indian paths were then in common use, and the one from The Loo to Savonette was comparatively easy to traverse.

Thus the settlement of Demerara was commenced, and by the end of the year, troolie houses were scattered along the river and creeks, while the ringing of the axe could be heard from the third island up to where Plantation Christianburg is now situated.

For comparison with future years, when Demerara began to make an impression on the carrying trade, it may be mentioned, that the two regular vessels took away from Essequibo for Zeeland, 1,219 hhds. of sugar in 1745, and 1,342½ hhds. and 1 bag of coffee in 1746, besides other produce. The hogshead contained about 800 lbs. at this time, and there was generally great loss on the voyage by leakage of molasses. Roughly estimating at 6 cwt. for each on arrival, at fifty shillings per cwt., the sugar production of Essequibo would be worth in 1746, £20,137·10 or, taking into account the difference in the value of money, about £40,000. Besides this, the exports would be increased by the rum and molasses sold to the vessels from New England, and probably a fair quantity of sugar illegally shipped.

GRAVESANDE paid many visits of inspection to Demerara in the course of the year 1746, to watch the progress of the new settlement, and fix the localities of the various concessions. These visits were made in the tent-boat of the colony, GRAVESANDE being generally accompanied by his assistant or clerk, who was a son of the late Commandeur GELSKERKE. There being no land surveyor in the colony, a great deal of care was needed to prevent boundary disputes, and the Commandeur and his clerk were necessarily obliged to act in a manner as surveyors.

On one of these occasions, when the clerk had taken his wife and child for a trip to Demerara, a serious accident occurred by which the clerk and his wife and child were drowned, while GRAVESANDE had a very narrow escape.

The party consisted of the Commandeur, and GELSKERKE, with the wife and infant child of the latter, who were rowed by six stalwart negroes. On arriving opposite Parica they found the sea so very rough that the negroes had great difficulty in handling the oars. What with the ground swell and the chopping sea caused by the wind and tide being contrary, the lady was very much alarmed and the Commandeur left the tent or cabin,—which was not simply an awning, but a wooden structure—to order the negroes to keep the boats' head to the waves. Suddenly a squall struck the boat, and encountering the resistance of the tent, upset it, the clerk and his wife and child being prevented from escaping and drowned. GRAVESANDE and the negroes were however thrown into the water, but as the Commandeur was unable to swim, he would probably have lost his life, had it not happened that one of the negroes named ABOMINE saw the danger and came to his assistance. Twice GRAVESANDE sunk, but ABOMINE, watching his opportunity, succeeded at last in laying hold of his master, and drew him ashore, where he soon recovered and was able to walk to a neighbouring plantation.

The Commandeur was very grateful to the faithful negro, and wanted to give him his freedom, together with that of his wife and child. Being Company's slaves however, this was out of his power, he therefore wrote to the Directors, telling the story in most feeling language, and intimating his desire to give the family their liberty. Having very little money, he could not well offer to buy them, and he naturally hoped that the Directors would also feel grateful that their representative had been saved from drowning. But no ! the Chamber of Zeeland, like many other corporations, had neither feeling, conscience, nor humanity, and very coolly told GRAVESANDE that he might have the slaves for seven hundred guilders, that being their average value as newly imported Africans.

On the 8th of January, 1746, it was reported to the Council of Justice that there had been a mutiny of the soldiers at Fort Zeelandia. Sergeant J. C. PRETORIUS and several privates were brought before the Council, where the Sergeant was sentenced to death, and the others to be flogged. The capital sentence was afterwards commuted to banishment. This and other matters are referred to in the following report of the Commandeur and Council of Policy to the Directors, dated December 4th :—

“ On the 16th of September, by the arrival of the ship *Vriendschap*, Capt. JURIAEN KREY we received Your Honourables' letter of the 8th of July of the present year.

“ What Your Honourables have been told by Capt. Lieutenant *MUNNUS*, that there has been no session of the Council of Justice of this river, is untrue ; if such had been the case the undersigned would have communicated the same to Your Honourables. We do not know what the Captain Lieutenant has communicated to you, but after the desertion of some of the soldiers in January last, the most guilty were punished, and at the same time asked, in the presence of the Council of Justice and the garrison, if they had any complaints to make against any particular officer, whereupon no charge whatever was brought.

“ We say again, that to our knowledge no wages in coin have been paid from the Company's cash to any person whatever. We only know this, that

JACOB ILLBENERS, master tradesman on Pln. Duynenburg for two months in 1744, was paid by the first undersigned (the Commandeur) the sum of £5 (Flemish) which he did not think desirable to enter into the Soldiers' pay book.

"As to the delivery of the necessary hammocks and other requisites for the soldiers, we await your orders. We think that the cotton hammocks, to be bought here at from 15 to 20 guilders, would be best. The soldiers on their arrival here are much in debt for their transport, and no one being willing to credit them with anything, they necessarily become short of clothing. We have therefore thought it desirable to call your attention to this matter, and to ask, that while they are working out their debts, there should be sent out for each soldier, at cost price, two coarse white and four coloured shirts, four Flemish or osnaburg trowseers, two pairs of stockings, and six pairs of shoes, all of which are cheaper at home.

"The Secretary SPOORS, on Your Honourables' suggestion, has bought for Plantation *Duynenburg*, twelve head of good mules at a low price, and we enclose the estimate of the quantity of sugar likely to be delivered from Your Honourables' plantations during the next twelve months.

"As regards the rations requested for the Clerk BARRABET—these not having been granted because Your Honourables did not know what had been allowed to the Assistant GELSKERKE,—that Your Honourables may be satisfied on this point, we now beg to state that the quantity allowed him was a half hogshead of Beer, a half sam (10 glns.) Wine, and further in the same ratio, we therefore take the liberty of repeating our application.

"As Your Honourables write particularly concerning our selling of land, and especially of a certain lot sold for a hundred and ten Pistoles, we beg leave to mention the matter in brief, and give Your Honourables the particulars. The Surgeon DORDENS, having a few slaves in his possession, asked for a piece of land of 700 roods, to commence a sugar plantation, which was granted. He opened up a proper field the first season, but owing to his duties, or from some other reason unknown to us, became indifferent, and asked, when all of us were present, whether any one was inclined to buy the land. The second undersigned (Secretary SPOORS?) without thinking, offered ten Pistoles and thus became the purchaser. Since that time, a certain energetic Englishman named JOSEPH PATTINSON, who is in possession of ten slaves, has bought the place from the new owner for 110 Pistoles, with an allowance of two years to pay the purchase money. This is what actually took place. We believe that at first sight this transaction will appear very strange to Your Honourables, and we may say that if the sale had been made with forethought, it would not have been right, and Your Honourables might consider the money as belonging to the Company's cash. But when Your Honourables take it in good part, and refer to the explanation of the undersigned, you may consider the matter differently.

Further, we desire to give Your Honourables our information as to grants of land, by which you will see that nothing has been done contrary to your orders. Whatever grants of land on Hog Island have been made in our meetings, have been given openly, and nothing without the knowledge of Your Honourables. The second undersigned is willing to pay 1,000 Rix dollars; all the land in his possession has been bought at high prices. The first undersigned has a part of the land on which his plantation is situated, which he bought for 2,000 guilders, with nothing on it.

"We hope Your Honourables will have engaged a qualified Surgeon, and that he will arrive soon, as we are very much in need, since JEAN PIERRE BOLLE, who lived at Cartabo and looked after the old fort, brickery and indigo plantation, has died. We have been obliged to send JOHAN RUDOLPH FRYDLER of Plantation *Duynenburg*, to take charge of the indigo plantation; there is not much to be done at Cartabo since the brickery has been removed. *Duynenburg* is now under the charge of a young man named RUYSSCH, who has been provisionally accepted as *ondermeester* (Assistant Surgeon) by Surgeon-Major DYKMAN, on a salary of twelve guilders a month. The Surgeon CONRAD SMIT leaves by this vessel in accordance with your orders, by which departure Plantation *Pelgrim* is also deprived of a Surgeon.

"We have considered it our duty to report to Your Honourables, that land has already been granted in the Demerara river for twenty-one Plantations, the conditions of which we enclose. To carry on this colony successfully will require new importations of slaves.

The following of Your Honourables servants ask for increase of their monthly wages:—

Manager MALGRAAF has had an advance of *f*4, wants *f*6.

Managers LUIS and BOELPAP want each *f*8.

The Overseer of the Provision Ground wants *f*5,

The Bricklayer JACOBUS BLOM, whose merit is known to Your Honourables, the Smith PIETER MARET, the Carpenter ROBERT GOUTIER, the Surgeons FRYDLER and STRUYS each want *f*8, and the Sugar boiler and Foreman on Plantation *Pelgrim* each want *f*2.

"Wherewith we commend Your Honourables to the protection of God, &c."*

The meanness of the Company was very discouraging to GRAVESANDE. In 1745 he told the Directors, that the smithy was cold for want of iron and coal, the slaves had not received their rations for want of supplies, and he

* Brieven Aristodemus and Sincerus. The signatures are wanting in the copy, it is therefore not quite certain who the second undersigned was, but it may be presumed to have been the Secretary, as his signature generally followed that of the Commandeur.

himself had nothing but water to drink. On account of the unfavourable season, which caused a failure of the crop of provisions, there was almost a famine, which was only averted by importations of flour, meal and other foodstuffs from the English Islands. The want of clothing and ammunition was also much felt by the Commandeur, who wanted to see everything in proper order, and to cap the whole, small-pox appeared on Plantation *Duynenburg* and carried off a good number of the slaves.

These drawbacks and some fault-finders among the inhabitants, worried the Commandeur so much that on the 7th of December, 1746, he wrote to the Directors, asking them to allow him to resign. While acknowledging their good treatment, with thanks, he was bound to say that his salary was too small. Five hundred guilders per annum, besides rations, &c., was too little to provide for his table and family in a proper manner. He wished to perform his duties in an honourable way, without doing anything questionable, but he had great trouble with some discontented colonists. Having spent all his savings, as well as his salary, he had no money to pay the passage of his wife and family to the Netherlands, he therefore wished to remain and settle in the colony.

The Directors were unpleasantly surprised at this request, as they never before had such an able, energetic and straightforward Commandeur in *Essequibo*. They therefore wrote to him on the 7th of August, 1747, expressing their great sorrow, and making promises of better treatment if he would withdraw his resignation. The Ten even took the trouble to second the Chamber of Zeeland by writing to him in the most flattering terms, stating that they were very pleased with his government, also that they agreed with all his views respecting the new colony in the *Demerara*, at the same time earnestly desiring him to remain and carry out the project to the best of his ability.

His salary would be increased to f800 if he consented, and his second son **WARNARD JACOB**, he appointed assistant, in place of **GELSKERKE** who had been drowned.

As a present the Ten gave him his faithful slave **ABOMINE** and his family, and empowered him to act with severity against those who had been troublesome and slanderous. Having obtained these allowances, and liberty to carry out his projects, **GRAVESANDE** agreed to remain for the present, while the Directors became a little more liberal.

In 1747 considerable alarm was felt in **Essequibo** on account of a rumoured invasion from Spanish **Guiana**. On the 7th of October, the Commandeur proposed to the Council of Justice, an extraordinary head tax of one rix dollar on each slave, for the purpose of procuring fifty additional soldiers to protect the colony, as well as ammunition for its defence. It was decided to call up the **Burgher Companies** and submit the matter, leaving them to decide whether they would pay the tax, or undertake the extra duty themselves; after this should have been done, the Councillors would decide what further measures should be taken.* Whether this tax was imposed or not, does not appear, but it is probable that as the alarm wore off the need for it was no longer felt.

The cause of this scare was the action of the **Spaniards** in building a fort up the **Cuyuni**, and prohibiting the Company's postholder and traders from visiting the Indian tribes in that direction. **GRAVESANDE** protested against this in letters to the Spanish Governor, and also represented the matter to the Directors, together with complaints of the **Caribs** of the lower **Orinoco**, that Spanish Missions were being established among them. The Company having brought these high-handed proceedings to the notice of the **States General**, the Dutch Ambassador at **Madrid** pro-

* *Brieven Aristodemus en Sincerus.*

tested so strongly, that the Spanish Government declared they had no designs against Essequibo, and gave orders to the Governor of Spanish Guiana not to cause any further difficulties. As for the Missionaries, they were obliged to abandon their attempts, not from any regard for the Dutch protests, but because the Caribs refused to have anything to do with them.*

Fort Zeelandia had been finished about 1744, and was now considered a strong fortress for a small colony like Essequibo. HARTSINCK describes it as having been square, with four ramparts, provided with 18 or 19 guns, inside which were three covered masoned redoubts having flat roofs with embrasures, serving for barracks for soldiers and a powder magazine. There was also, near the store, a horn work lined with palisades, and armed with twelve guns. Near the fort a little village grew up, and on the 3rd of July, 1746, JAN SMIT received a concession of thirty roods to build a house, and a license to keep an inn for six years. In 1748, after forty roods had been granted to ISAAC VAN DER CRUYSE to build a house, it was decided that in future no one should have more than fifteen roods at Fort Zeelandia.

As a further defence in addition to the fort, a galley was built by the planters. It appears to have been a kind of flat-bottomed sloop, armed with four metal culverins and about forty swivel guns provided by the Company, while the planters supplied a crew of negroes who were commanded by one of the Burghers. Kyk-over-al having been allowed to fall into decay, it was resolved in 1748 to demolish it, and HARTSINCK states that some of the bricks were used in erecting a sugar mill on Plantation *Duynenburg*.

Land speculation became very rife in Essequibo from about 1746 to 1750, so that some efforts were necessary to

* Netscher, *Geschiedenis van Essequibo*, &c.

check it. In 1746, Wakenaam was stated, in the Council of Policy, to have been abandoned by its owners, which Messrs. DOIG and WILSON indignantly denied, saying that they had slaves working there, and were prepared to go on with the cultivation. Other cases of a similar nature seem to show that it had become a practice to procure a grant of land and wait for a purchaser, in the meanwhile, keeping just enough in cultivation to prove compliance with the conditions. As such a state of things was not conducive to progress, GRAVESANDE tried his best to put it down. It appears that the English were more noted for speculation than the Dutch, and Messrs. DOIG and WILSON may be quoted as examples. They had apparently received a grant of the whole of the island of Wakenaam, but on the matter being mentioned they sold Plantation *New Brandenburg* on that island, with 22 slaves, to SOLOMON PERSEK for £2,600. In the same year JAMES BARRY, attorney of THOMAS WEST and PAUL BEDFORD, transported Plantation *New Walcheren* to GEDNEY CLARKE, with its slaves, for £35,000. The first was probably a made up affair, as the twenty slaves would alone have been worth more than the amount stated, unless they were infants, invalids, or old and infirm. No particulars are given as to the number of slaves or acres in cultivation on *New Walcheren*; but it may be presumed that this estate was one of the few that were in good working order. The three Company's plantations shipped altogether about 150 to 200 hogsheads of sugar annually, and it is probable that few private estates made more than fifty. The year 1747 was so very unfavourable that the shipments of sugar by the two vessels only amounted to 559½ hhds. for the whole colony. This was probably consequent on the unfavourable weather of 1745, which would affect the crop cut the following year and shipped in 1747. By sending in his resignation, as before stated, GRAVESANDE shut the mouths of the Directors before this small shipment

was on its way. The same year saw the final abandonment of indigo cultivation, Manager BOELPAP informing the Council of Policy at the meeting in April, that all the fields had been destroyed by caterpillars.

GRAVESANDE's projects for improving Demerara, which the Ten had agreed to in 1747, included the establishment of a Brandwagt or guard-house at the mouth of the river, manned by a sergeant and five soldiers. This was built in 1748, and used as a post of observation on all boats entering and leaving the river, mainly to prevent smuggling. No vessels were allowed as yet, to come direct to Demerara, but were obliged to enter and clear at Fort Zeelandia, to which produce had to be taken and from thence supplies procured. From the Brandwagt, which was situated on what is now the front of Stabroek, probably on the site of the Market, the Sergeant made periodical tours of inspection to the estates on the river, and reported to the Commandeur. This slight supervision was however soon felt by GRAVESANDE to be inadequate. Very little produce had been shipped up to the present, but the work of clearing and planting was going on very favourably, many of the more enterprising planters abandoning Essequibo to come here. Essequibo was at a standstill, and the Commandeur predicted to the Directors that Demerara would be ahead of the mother colony in a few years.

One of the projects for developing the resources of Demerara is worthy of mention, and even suggestive now-a-days. In 1748, IGNACE COUETHIAL, a French Catholic, who had been one of the miners under HILDEBRAND, asked for a large grant of savannah land between the rivers Demerara and Berbice. Here he wished to establish a cattle farm, and pasture twelve to fifteen thousand head of oxen and horses ; he also asked permission to build a Church and maintain a priest, at his own expense. The grant was never made on account of some difficulties, probably con-

nected with the boundary of Berbice, but he afterwards obtained a regular grant for a coffee plantation on the site of what is now Plantation *Wales*, but which he called *Hoebabboe*, from the name of the neighbouring creek.

Being now in the good graces of the Directors, GRAVESANDE applied for leave of absence to pay a visit to the Netherlands, which was reluctantly granted two years after. Meanwhile he continued his efforts for the welfare of the mother colony and its offshoot, and succeeded so far that progress began to be shown by the exports. In 1748, probably for the first time, *four* vessels arrived and took away 2,292 hhds. of sugar; in 1749, *eight* carried 3,579½ hhds., while in 1750 five carried 2,529 hhds. and one bag coffee. One of those which arrived in 1749 was a slave ship, bringing a cargo of negroes from Africa, which were particularly acceptable.

What with the fears of a raid from Spanish Guiana, and the impediments to the journies of the postholders, the Indian trade had dwindled to very little. The new arrivals had also made so much trouble by interfering with these people, that the tribes began to retire farther and farther away from the settlements. The Commandeur did his best to prevent disputes, and punished either Indians or whites when convicted, but this did not suit the natives, as the only justice they knew was revenge.

In 1748 two Indian slaves were executed for attempting to murder, the one his master, and the other a postholder; the following year, the free Indian IOERISOERIKOE having confessed to murdering his wife, was also executed by decapitation, while in 1750 a slave named HAZARD was sentenced to death for murdering an Indian. In 1748 the Commandeur had reason to complain that JOHN POOLER had sent away a free Indian to Barbados, and later some planters were ordered to release eight Indians whom they had taken by force, which occasioned a renewal of the

Publication of 1717.* In 1748 it was decided to re-open the Indian trade, but with all his perseverance GRAVESANDER did but little. He still believed in the riches of the interior, and credited the rumours then in circulation that an expedition from the Spanish Missions in the Upper Cuyuni had discovered the veritable El Dorado.

The slaves gave a great deal of trouble to the Council of Justice. Among the regulations of this period was the prohibition of their going about the river without passes, and that they were not to be worked on Sundays.

Only flagrant crimes on the part of the Negroes were brought before the Council; murderers were sentenced to death, while lesser offences, such as attempts to kill their fellow slaves, were punished by banishment and sale in other colonies. There was always a difficulty in getting slaves brought to justice, from the fact that the masters lost their services during the period of detention, so that even very serious offences were generally punished on the estates, in such a manner that the negro was not incapacitated for labour. This was what caused such an outcry at a later period, but when the matter is looked at from the master's point of view, it only amounts to this, that a lighter punishment was inflicted by his master than if the slave had been tried by the Council of Justice. That there was cruelty is certain, but not to slaves only, for white men were flogged at Fort Zeelandia, and torture was legal in the Netherlands up to the beginning of the Nineteenth century.

In the cases of white persons convicted of serious offences, the usual punishment was banishment from the colony, and sometimes confiscation of their estates. In 1748, C. F. PATHUIS was sentenced (in his absence) to be arrested and forwarded to the Netherlands for punishment,

* The value of an Indian slave appears from the Minutes of Justice of 1749 to have been £710.

for using improper language in a letter, towards the Ten, the Chamber of Zeeland, and the Council of Justice. Another person was banished for attempting to obtain money under false pretences, and even theft was punished in the same way. The first notice of a bankruptcy is that of JAN SMTT, the tavern keeper at Fort Zeelandia, in January 1750. The Council of Justice ordered the publication of the names of all persons indebted to him, that they be called upon to pay, that all his possessions be sold for the benefit of the creditors, and, that he be imprisoned. He was ordered to be released in July following, and at the next meeting in October allowed to quit the colony.

GRAVESANDE sailed for the Netherlands, on leave of absence, on the 11th of April, 1750, leaving the Secretary ADRIAN SPOORS, as acting Commandeur. He took with him his son WABNARD JACOB, but left his wife and the other children at Fort Zeelandia, including his eldest son, whose name was JONATHAN SAMUEL, of whom we shall hear later.

CHAPTER VII.

PROGRESS OF THE "TWO RIVERS," 1750—1762.

Reception of Gravesande in the Netherlands—He is appointed Directeur-General—Dispute between the Zeeland Chamber and the Ten—Gravesande returns and installs his son Jonathan Samuel as the first Commandeur of Demerara—Land Concessions—Seat of government in Demerara established on Borssele—English Catechist—Court of Justice—Indian slaves—Horses—Desertion of slaves to the Orinoco—False alarm of a Spanish invasion—Indian trade—Smuggling—Concessions in Demerara reach the mouth of the river—Bercheyk's chart—Minutes of Council of Policy—Predicant for Demerara wanted—Passports—Taverns—Criticism of the authorities prohibited—Regulations—Crimes and punishments—Jonathan S. Gravesande dies and is succeeded by L. L. van Bercheyck—Dissatisfaction on the part of the Barbadians.

GRAVESANDE was favourably received by the Directors of Zeeland on his arrival in Middelburg, who listened with interest to his account of the progress of Essequibo and Demerara. His ideas as to the necessity for a Commandeur for the new colony were treated with respect, and on the 15th of August, 1750, he was appointed Directeur-General of the two rivers, with an increase of salary, while his son JONATHAN SAMUEL, received the post of Commandeur of Demerara. These appointments were confirmed by the Ten, and afterwards by the Stadtholder, as Governor and Chief Director of the Company. Other alterations were made on the representations of GRAVESANDE, among them being a repeal of the obnoxious order against his possessing a plantation, and the granting him an allowance called table money.*

* This represented what is now the Governor's allowance for contingencies, being granted for the purpose of enabling him to entertain visitors, &c.

Another consequence of this visit was not so agreeable to the Chamber of Zeeland. The Ten began to take more interest in Essequibo and Demerara, and thought it their business to enquire into matters a little more. The Chamber had maintained from the commencement of the new Company, that Essequibo had been established at first by Zeeland merchants, that when the Company in general were ready to abandon the place, they alone agreed to take it over, and that its present position was entirely due to their care and attention. On the other hand, the Ten claimed that under the Charter no particular Chamber could have a monopoly apart from the others; they had always held the supreme power and never abandoned it, and had also exercised their right of commissioning the Commandeurs, only allowing the Zeeland Chamber to manage the colony under their supreme control. The Ten wanted to open the two rivers to all the provinces, without any special licence from the Chamber, but this the latter refused, and would let no vessel go there without what was called a "Wood and Salt Letter," for which a fee was demanded, and which could only be procured from the Chamber. As may be supposed, this dispute hampered the colony very much, and, during the twelve years it lasted, prevented that progress which might naturally have been expected.

The two principal Chambers were those of Amsterdam and Zeeland, between which there had always been a jealous rivalry. The merchants of the capital were the great bankers of the time, and on the report of the land fever in Essequibo and Demerara, they naturally thought of these colonies as good places for the investment of capital. It is also probable that applications for loans had been already made, and refused on account of the difficulty of shipping produce to other than the ports of Zeeland. At this time, and to a certain extent even up to now, it was customary for money-lenders and mortgagees of

property, when dealing with West Indian planters, to exact that the produce of the estate should be shipped only to them. How could this be done when Zeeland refused Amsterdam permission to trade?

To an impartial enquirer it appears that the Ten were right. As early as 1685, they had passed a Resolution to allow free trade to Essequibo for all the Provinces, but this remained a dead letter, partly because the Chamber discouraged it, but principally on account of the pettiness of the trade. Now that there was something worth going for, the Amsterdam shareholders began to ask why their vessels should be kept out. Plenty of long arguments were used by the Chamber of Zeeland, but they had a very poor case, nevertheless the matter was reported on over and over again by one Chamber and another, the Ten, and the States General, and finally, taken to the Stadtholder.

The Ten having declared that Essequibo was open to all citizens of the Netherlands, the claimants of the monopoly were up in arms at once, and on the 30th of September, 1750, sent a Memorial to the States General to prove their rights, at the same time asking to be upheld in enforcing them. One of the reasons for establishing free trade being the alleged difficulty of the planters in getting vessels enough to carry away their produce, the Chamber replied as follows:—

“So far from there having been a want of shipping to export their produce, on the contrary, vessels were always at hand, so much so, that the ship *Essequibo Friendship* returned home on the 28th of December, 1749, in ballast, while other vessels had been obliged to remain there far beyond their lay days, for want of freight. Although in 1747 one ship less than the usual number had been despatched to the colony, this was occasioned by their High Mightinesses and the Admiralty of Zeeland, having pressed three Essequibo vessels into the service of the States, of which one was ready to sail.”

This statement was generally true, but there is not the slightest doubt that a large portion of the produce was

quietly shipped to the West Indies, and there exchanged for slaves and other necessities, on account of the difficulty of procuring supplies in Essequibo. The Directors had always been too cautious in forwarding provisions and other necessities; probably they would have been much sharper in doing this, had they considered that the return cargoes depended on it. The difference between one year's shipment and another was too great to be accounted for by bad seasons alone. To anticipate a little, the exports of sugar were, in 1751, 1445 hhds., and in the following year 2,606½ hhds., the first in four and the other in six vessels. What a difference in the next two years, only 447½ hhds. in 1753 and 285 hhds. in 1754, in one and two vessels respectively. It may be confidently asserted that a great deal of smuggling took place in the latter period, perhaps some of it in Amsterdam vessels.

At the request of the States General, the Amsterdam Chamber made a counter report to that of Zeeland in January 1751. The trade with Essequibo had been opened by the Ten in 1685, to all citizens of the Netherlands. The Zeeland Chamber had been allowed to manage the colony; but only as subordinate to the General Company, to which the government, trade and navigation, had always belonged. A large number of documents were brought forward, as evidence to prove that the supreme authority had never been delegated to Zeeland, but that the Ten, by the appointment of Commandeurs and interference in other matters, had always maintained it. The claim to Essequibo on the part of Zeeland, was a new one, as until the previous year, when the Commandeur had been ordered not to allow any vessel to load or unload without a Wood and Salt Letter, there had been no prohibition of trading by the other provinces. To this, Zeeland replied that they had received a concession of the exclusive trade and navigation, and had held it for eighty years, while as for the

Wood and Salt Letter, any one could get it on paying the fee. The citizens of Zeeland traded to the Wild Coast before 1600, and before the West India Company had been even thought of, much less established, Essequibo was already defended by a fort named after a Zeeland family, Fort ter Hoogen, while it did not appear that any but Zeelanders had traded there since. They had continued and maintained their rights to the exclusion of all others, but the expenses and profits had always been properly divided among all the Chambers.

In this way the dispute was carried on for twenty years, hampering trade, and standing in the way of progress. The Chamber of Zeeland was continually promising to do things when the matter was settled; and this delay [was particularly disheartening to GRAVESANDE, as it prevented him from carrying out his projects for the benefit of the two rivers.

After a residence of nearly two years in the Netherlands GRAVESANDE returned to Essequibo, bringing with him his wife's nephew, LAURENS LODEWYK VAN BERCHEYCK, who was a Land Surveyor. On his arrival, he installed his son JONATHAN SAMUEL, as the first Commandeur of Demerara, who, although the appointment was dated August 15th, 1750, does not appear to have assumed office until his father's [return. At first, he did not reside in Demerara, but lived at Fort Zeelandia with his father, paying frequent visits to Demerara, where BERCHEYCK was sent in April, 1752, to settle land disputes and lay out the boundaries of the concessions.

By this time most of the desirable positions along the banks to the Demerara had been taken up, and, as early as January 3rd, 1751, the new Commandeur received a concession of 4,000 acres, from the Madewine Creek downwards, to establish a sugar plantation. So great was the influx of foreigners, that on the arrival of the Directeur-

General, a publication was issued that all new settlers must take the oath of allegiance. In July 1752, it was resolved that no concession of 2,000 acres should be granted in future except on condition that a sugar mill be erected within three years. In October following the Directeur-General received a concession of 2,000 acres below the Haymeroony Creek, and at the same time was granted a piece of land of the same area near that of the Commandeur. In September 1753, it was resolved that a fee of 25 guilders should be exacted from all grantees of 2,000 acres, in addition to the other expenses of survey, &c. From a suit in the Council of Justice of a later date, it appears that BERCHEYCK charged 200 guilders as his fee for the survey of an estate of 2,000 acres, *i.e.* two stivers an acre. What with the expenses of the survey, and more strict attention, the conditions of settlement were complied with to a certain extent, and land speculation became less easy, but it was still carried on to a considerable degree until 1761, when a Publication was issued that no one should be allowed to sell his plantation until it had been five years in his possession.

In 1753, the necessity for a centre where a government office could be established in Demerara, was much felt. The Brandwagt was too far down the river, and the only place where the business of the colony could be conducted was on the estate of the Commandeur. There were four little islands near Soesdyke, the first attached to Plantation *Land of Canaan*, the second called Borsselen,* the third Biesen, and the fourth, now joined to west shore, Camouni. On the second of these, Borsselen, principally on account of its convenience to the Commandeur, it being nearly abreast of his plantation, it was resolved to establish a capital. It was laid out in twenty-four lots, of one square

* Named in honour of the representative of the Stadtholder in the Ten, P. J. van Borsselle van der Hooge.

chain each, and on the 1st of July, 1753, twelve of these lots were granted for building purposes, and on the 30th of September following, nine others, the remaining three being probably those on which the government offices were to be erected. Among the grantees were the Directeur-General, L. L. VAN BRECKHEYCK, S. C. VAN BRECKHEYCK, JOHN HALY & Co., J. THOMAS, &c., &c.

The same year the English planters asked permission of the Directors, to bring a Catechist or Scripture Reader from Saba at their own expense, to perform Divine Service in Demerara, as it was so very far from the church on Fort Island. This was granted, and as there was no Church, Service was performed at the houses of the planters. Very little can be gleaned concerning this Reverend gentleman, as neither the Company nor the Councils had anything to do with him.

The Burgher system had been already introduced into Demerara, and as the necessity for a Court of Justice began to be felt, the Council of Essequibo resolved on July 3rd, 1753, that the Burgher Officers, with the Commandeur, should be empowered to try petty offences.

The difficulties in connection with Indian slaves, were brought before the Council of Policy on the 9th of April, 1752, and a Publication ordered which ran as follows:—

“ We, LAURENS STORM VAN 's GRAVESEND, Directeur-General, and the Councillors of Policy over the Colony and underlying Rivers and Districts of Essequibo, on behalf of the Chartered West India Company of the United Netherlands.

“ Following the express orders of the Honourable Gentlemen Directors of the West India Company's Chamber of Zeeland, dated October 22nd, 1751, in confirmation and renewal of a Resolution passed at the meeting of the Ten, of the 19th of November, 1717, given to be carried out, by the then governor, the Gentleman Commandeur PIETER VAN DER HUYDEN REKEN, we give notice that the inhabitants of this colony, in regard to the trade in red slaves, are permitted to have in their service six head of the said red slaves, and no more, to be procured from the Orinoco, by purchase or exchange, for each of whom they shall pay an annual tax to the Company of

six guilders, above the head-tax of one rix dollar ; also, that none of the above-mentioned inhabitants are permitted to remove any red slaves from this river, or to sell them to others than the inhabitants of this colony, and further, if the inhabitants should sell or exchange any red slaves among themselves, they shall be bound to pay, as a tax to the Company for each, five pieces of eight or rix dollars, half by the seller and half by the buyer, and that successively at every sale or exchange of a red slave.

“ Be it known that we, in confirmation of the Order and intent of their High Honourables, do hereby order by these, that no person shall have in his possession at any time more than six head of red slaves, who on their introduction, must be properly reported ; also, that they must be entered on the annual list for assessing the head-tax ; further, they must not be sent away or sold out of this Colony and District, and those sold here must be reported as aforesaid, and moreover the Office must be satisfied by payment of the five rix dollars per head, on pain of confiscation of the said red slaves, and above that, double their value.

Done in Rio Essequibo at Fort Zeelandia, the 28th April, 1752.

The Ordinance of their High Honourables, the Gentleman Directeur-General and Councillors of Policy.

(Signed) L. STORM VAN 's GRAVESANDE.

The difficulty of procuring horses for the cane mills was only second to that of the want of slaves. As was mentioned before, these were brought from New England, and often died on the voyage, in the calms of what sailors called the “ horse latitudes.” On the 2nd of July 1752, it was resolved that no New England vessels should be admitted without horses, or the salted heads as satisfactory proof of loss during the voyage. What was the number of these vessels arriving annually in Essequibo is not recorded, but that it was considerable, may be easily believed. In 1750 there arrived in Surinam, vessels bringing 409 of these animals, besides 14 mules, these being all that remained of 638 horses shipped, 229 having died on the voyage. Every vessel was bound to bring six, without which, or their heads, she was not allowed to enter. Their cargoes consisted of, besides the live animals, salt meat, fish and flour, and in return they were allowed to take away wood, rum

and molasses, the Captains being obliged to affirm on oath before clearing, that they had no sugar on board. However, although this was the law in Essequibo as well as in Surinam, it could not be properly enforced in either colony. There was very little money in Essequibo and Demerara, and as may be supposed, the masters of the light New England schooners were not too scrupulous to slip past the Fort in Essequibo, or the Brandwaght in Demerara, during the night, and load a few hogsheads of sugar. It will be interesting to note in this connection, that in January 1754, the snow *Susanna* of Halifax, arrived in Surinam, with 10 *camels*, 10 oxen, 1 mule, and 32 horses. Where the camels were brought from, or what was done with them, does not appear; probably the "Bluenose" Captain had bought them in one of the Islands as a speculation. These animals were in use at Barbados in the time of LIGON, to bring sugar from the plantations to town, but they could hardly be of much use in a land where only water carriage was possible. In April 1755, the Council of Policy in Essequibo resolved, that as the English mules and horses did not thrive, and were very sickly and weak, a boat-load of provisions should be sent to the Orinoco, to exchange for creole mules, to see if they would do better.

On the 7th of January 1754, the matter of the continual desertion of slaves to the Orinoco was considered, and as it was thought by the planters to be very serious, the Burgher Captains had petitioned the Council of Justice to establish a post on one of the banks of the Maroco. One of the Councillors, E. PYPERSBURG, was deputed to examine the proposed site and report, which he did at the meeting in April following. He had gone to the place with the Burgher Captains, and thought it fairly suitable, but inconvenient in some respects. On consideration the Council decided, that as the expenses of the colony were already very high, nothing could be done at present.

Great fears were entertained of an invasion from Spanish Guiana, in the latter half of the same year, and an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Justice was called on September the 10th, to consider the matter. The Directeur-General informed the members of his having heard the sad news that the Spaniards intended to invade and pillage the colony, and recommended that they should take such measures as would serve, by the Grace of God, to protect the rivers under these critical circumstances, and to disappoint such wicked schemes. After deliberation it was resolved:—

1. That JAN PIETER THOMAN be sent to Spanish Guiana, as an express messenger to the Governor, with a despatch from the Honourable the Directeur-General, to inform him that these rumours are known here, and to ask the occasion and reason for such preparations for war in a time of peace.

2. That an armed boat be stationed at Maroco to keep guard, and observe all the movements in the direction of the Orinoco, with instructions that on the first sign, or well-founded suspicion, of the approach of an enemy, the boatmen should at once come and inform the Directeur-General.

3. That, by the messenger, a safe conduct be sent to a person named MEYER, who has lived in Surinam, but at present is with the Indians in Barima, so that he may come here, and perhaps be of some use.

4. To formulate the different Burgher Militia regulations, and to publish them, with such further amplifications and amendments as may be found necessary, so that a third of the force may assemble at the Fort, under their Officers, as soon as the signals of danger are given.

5. That the English vessels, which are in the river, shall come and lie under the guns of the Fort at the first alarm, and their sailors, in case of need, be pressed, under promise of payment, to serve the colony.

6. To order the Burgher Captains to make up their Companies and to keep a muster roll of their men, in order to make a proper division.

7. That a light canoe be furnished, manned with Indians and two or three creoles, under the command of one or two persons, who will be paid—say either ADRIAAN CHRISTIANSEN, HENDRIK SCHER, or some other,—and armed with a swivel gun, to cruise off Capoey and fire signals of distress at the least sign of the enemy, and then hasten at once to Zeelandia and report.

These rumours were to the effect, that the Spaniards had mustered a little army of five hundred men up the

Orinoco, for the purpose of attacking both Essequibo and Berbice. GRAVESANDE wrote to the Directors on the 12th of October, and Secretary SPOORS, the previous day, both reporting that Essequibo was in the greatest state of consternation. PYPERSBERG had gone to Spanish Guiana, where he had found a Colonel, in charge of a regiment of infantry, a Captain of a man-of-war, three engineers, and a few other gentlemen. On his telling them of the rumoured invasion, the Colonel asked him "who had been making up such lying stories," and assured him that they had never had the slightest intention of attacking Essequibo, but on the contrary, they were going to the Rio Negro, to fix the boundaries between the territories of Spain and Portugal. This answer only partially satisfied the Directeur-General, who was suspicious that it had been simply given to cloak their designs. He had meanwhile sent to Barbados for 1,500 lbs of gunpowder, 100 cutlasses, and 100 cartridge pouches. The Directors reported the matter to the States General, stating that they thought GRAVESANDE had been justified in taking precautions, and putting the colony in a state of defense. They also sent a vessel to Essequibo with some trusty soldiers, 3,000 lbs of gunpowder, and a large supply of ammunition. It was afterwards found that the Spanish expedition was really for the purpose stated, namely, to meet the Portuguese Commissioners on the Rio Negro, and settle the limits of the respective territories, so that Essequibo was frightened about nothing.

The Indian trade was now in the hands of a number of private persons, who went about the upper Essequibo and negotiated on their own accounts. As was before mentioned, these people were very unscrupulous and often got into difficulties. At the April meeting of the Council of Justice in 1755, JEAN PIERRE MAILLARD was charged with causing the death of one or two Accaway Indians. The negro ANDRIES gave evidence that MAILLARD had put his

pistol to the breast of an Indian, who was indebted to him, and called out " You can and you shall pay me ; they are Accaways, kill them." On this MAILLARD's people killed an Accaway and an Arrawack. MAILLARD admitted that the two Indians had been killed, but denied taking any part in the matter, directly or indirectly. After consideration it was decided, that, as such disturbances would be very prejudicial to the colony, the trade in the upper Essequibo by private persons, should be discontinued. A publication was accordingly issued on the 3rd of October 1757, ordering the inhabitants not to trade there in future. Whether there were then any of the Company's trading posts in that direction, does not appear, but as no mention is made of such, it may be presumed that ARINDA had been abandoned.* In 1758 the Spaniards made an attack on the Cuyuni post, which occasioned GRAVESANDE to write a letter to the Governor of Spanish Guiana protesting against the action, but without any good result. All trading with Spanish colonies being illegal, the post-holders in that direction were to a certain extent outside the law, and could obtain no redress. Notwithstanding a few disputes, the trade with Spanish Guiana was carried on to a considerable extent, principally by taking goods there to exchange for mules and horses.

In 1755, the Directors complained of the increase of official expenses, without a corresponding expansion of trade. Although so many new concessions had been granted, the amount of produce shipped was infinitesimally small, and, as the Company's estates hardly paid their expenses, there was almost nothing gained from the Indian trade, the Company's profits being reduced to those on their vessels, and the two and a half per cent import tax, which they were entitled to levy on produce. No vessels had

* The posts were by no means fixed for any lengthened period, being often abandoned or removed to more suitable localities, according to the exigencies of the Indian trade.

arrived from Zeeland this year, and in 1756, only three, which carried away 1,218½ hhds sugar, 8 brls coffee and 3 bales cotton. As there were something over 150 plantations in both rivers, it will be seen that the Directors were not unreasonable in expressing their dissatisfaction. It is certain that GRAVESANDE knew of produce illegally shipped, but what could he do? The planters must get their supplies from somewhere, and pay for them in something or other; besides, it was cheaper to make a trip to Barbados in a sloop loaded with sugar, and bring back slaves and other necessities, than to wait until the Directors pleased to send their own vessels. By this time some of the planters had succeeded in obtaining advances from a Bank in Amsterdam, and it may be presumed that the money lenders looked sharp after the produce, and succeeded in getting it into Holland, without the knowledge or consent of the Chamber of Zeeland. Owing to the dispute with the Ten, this would be only considered as enforcing their rights; we may therefore safely conclude that the official returns show nothing like the amount of produce actually shipped.

As early as 1752, the concessions in Demerara had reached as far down as *Garden of Eden*, and the year following, to *Diamond*, while in 1759, the plantations on which Georgetown is built were granted. The principal grantee in this neighbourhood was JACQUES SALIGNAC, who received 5000 acres below the Brandwagt on the 1st of April 1759, and on the 1st of July following another 500 acres. This would include *Vlissengen*, *La Bourgade* and *Eve Leary*, which last is probably No. 1 on BERCHEYCK's chart, where it is stated to belong to THOMAS ADAMS. SALIGNAC seems to have been able to influence the Council of Policy to ignore the regulations entirely, for we find that in 1761, he was granted the plantation of JOHN HEYLIGER, (now *Ruimveld*) which had been declared forfeited from non-compliance with the conditions. After he had obtained

these extraordinary concessions, the Council passed a resolution on July 5, 1761, that in future no one should be allowed to dispose of his land until it had been five years in his possession. *La Penitence* was a half of JOHN HEYLIGER's grant, which he sold, almost immediately after receiving it, to J. F. DE SAFFON, while *Jerish Hope* (*Werk-en-Rust*) was granted to R. B. DALY at the same time as the greater concession to SALIGNAC. CORNELIS LEARY appears to have bought the great concession from SALIGNAC, as we find him in possession of it at a later date.

LAURENS LODEWYCK VAN BEROHEYOK published his chart of the Demerara River in 1759. He was then Captain Commandant of the troops, a Councillor of Policy, and the son-in-law of the Directeur General. The Directors were so pleased with the chart, that they presented him with a cask of red wine and a slave. His land surveying was not done officially, and therefore the work was a private one, being published on his own account. The title is, "Chart of the River Demerary, formerly Immenary, situated on the North Coast of South America, in North Latitude 6 degrees 40 minutes," and it was dedicated to a long string of Honourable Gentlemen shareholders of the West India Company of the Chamber of Zeeland, and the Advocate of the Company. A hundred and eighteen plantations in the river and creeks, were enumerated, with their names, and those of their owners, and by signs and colours, whether they were sugar or coffee estates, and also if they had wind, water or saw mills. Two plantations belonging to Demerara were situated on the West Coast, one of them being apparently *Met-en-Meerzorg*, while those belonging to Essequibo extended to the Boeraserie. Demerara was the more important of the two rivers, of which the official returns of produce were, in 1757, 1594 hhds., and in 1758 only 859½ hhds. of sugar, shipped in three and two vessels respectively. What a great colony (on paper) !

As a specimen of the Proceedings of the Council of Policy the following abridged Minutes of the meeting, held October 5th 1755, will be interesting :—

The Manager, PIETER LUIS, was appointed a Councillor of Policy in place of the late ADRIAN MINNES, and took the oath and his seat in the Council.

“The Directeur-General, by order of their Honourables the Directors, handed to the Managers of the Company’s plantations, the Regulations just received by the ship *Jonge Abraham*.

“According to the Reports of the respective Managers there had died since the last meeting :—On *Duynenburg*, one Indian woman and a mule, on *Agtekerke*, an able-bodied man and a macroen woman and child, on *Pelgrim*, one full-grown man and two macroen women.

“The land granted at the last meeting to G. J. VAN DER HEIDEN, in the Creek Haweroceny, in Demerary, reaches to the land of G. BROUWERS. JACOB FREDERIK MUSEK of Upper Essequibo, petitioned for 600 roods of land, bounded by the property of MASSIMILLIANA, or from the fall Dritatte ; this was granted, the petitioner to specify the exact spot.

“In respect to the difference between J. S. ISKES and ISAAC NOTT, about their land in Demerary, for which HERR DYKMAN was authorised by the first party, with our permission, to see it measured ; the said place, by request of DYKMAN, was granted to DANIEL HEWARD.”

The people of Demerara now began to feel the need of a Predicant, and petitioned the Directors in 1757, for a suitable person to reside in that river, as the Church on Fort Island was too far, and PREDICANT GREVENBROEK, who was getting old and infirm, could not come to visit them. In reply, the Directors told GRAVESANDE that the matter would receive their consideration as soon as circumstances permitted, but at that time the uncertainty of their position in the dispute with the Ten, prevented freedom of action. In 1761 GREVENBROEK retired on a pension, and was succeeded by Dr. ISAAK LINGIUS, who visited Demerara twice a year, to perform Service and administer the Sacrament. There being no Church, he officiated at the house of the Commandeur, or in the Secretary’s Office on Borsselen Island.

The rules as to passports were strictly enforced at this time, no foreigners being allowed to remain more than one night without reporting themselves.

On account of some desertions of soldiers from Berbice, in 1757, it was mutually agreed the following year, between the authorities of both colonies, that no one should be allowed to go from either colony to the other without a pass.

Taverns seem to have been still in existence, as in 1756, the Council of Justice forbade the sale of less than twelve bottles of spirits, wine or beer, outside a tavern. Every person who cursed or used a profane expression in a tavern, was bound to put for each, four schellings, into a closed box, to be kept by the tavern keeper, and, if he refused, he was to be reported to the Directeur-General. In 1757 JACQUES SALIGNAC was fined 25 guilders, for allowing rum to be sold and cards to be played at his house on Thanksgiving Day. On all Holy Days, every one was prohibited from giving rum or strong drink to his slaves, and the rules were very strict as to keeping order at such times.

The Directeur-General was very particular in regard to any discussion or criticism of his actions or those of the Councils. In 1756, two Barbadians, SAMUEL ODELL and A. ROACH, were banished, for writing a threatening letter to the Commandeur of Demerara. The following year a Publication was made, cautioning persons as to speaking against the Councils. In 1761, J. F. DE SAFFON charged Mr. BIRMINGHAM and two others, with saying that they knew him in Europe as a private soldier, which he thought an insult touching his honour, and wanted reparation. Such private quarrels, were generally settled by reprimands and cautions, but where the matter was one affecting the Government, the punishment was very heavy.

In 1760, it was decided that all persons commencing estates must pay poor money, and give an account of all their unlawful children, so that they might be assessed the fine. They must also have white men on their plantations,

and register their marks of shipment. The taxes were paid in produce, sugar being taken at the rate of one stiver per lb., rum 14 stivers, and molasses 7 stivers per gallon.

Atrocious crimes now became so prevalent, that strong efforts were made to put a stop to them. Hence arose that horrible cruelty with which the Dutch were afterwards charged. Hanging was, they thought, too good for such wretches, and so they tried to make examples of the more flagrant cases. In 1759, the negro FORTUYN was convicted of killing one, and wounding five persons, and sentenced to be broken on the wheel from the feet upwards, after which his head was to be cut off and stuck on a pole. In 1754, a mulatto woman named Lou was sentenced to have both ears cut off, for plotting with other slaves to run away, while another deserter, who had only one leg, was in 1757, sentenced to be deprived of the other, to effectually prevent his running away in future.

White men were sometimes charged with causing the death of slaves. In 1753, CHRISTOFFEL BEK, the foreman of Agtekerke, was banished for killing a woman, and in 1757, A. CHRISTIANSEN was fined 500 guilders for a similar offence. The case of Surgeon DAVIDSON is one of the most interesting, from the light it throws on the manners and customs of the time.

He was one of the Company's surgeons, having the medical charge of Pln. *Duynenburg*, and was charged on the 9th of November, 1762, with so brutally wounding a little negro boy, that he died almost immediately afterwards. The woman COMBE gave evidence, that she had taken some cakes to sell on the plantation, and as the Surgeon had no money, she agreed to exchange them for a piece of meat. DAVIDSON ordered his slave boy to cut the meat, but, on noticing that it was much larger than he thought necessary, he became very angry, and snatching the knife stabbed

the boy in the breast, so that the poor fellow died the same day.

On consideration, the Council thought the crime so flagrant, that they sentenced him to pay 300 guilders, the value of the boy, as well as a fine of 500 guilders, and to be degraded from his office and sent to the Demerara Brandwagt as a private soldier until these amounts were paid, and further that a slave, bought by him from the last vessel, (but not yet paid for) be sold by the Vendue Master, on account of that officer's claim on the negro.

Divorce cases were not wanting, and in 1755, there was one for breach of promise of marriage. FRANS VAN DER LOTH wanted to marry WILHELMINA BERTO, but MARIA BAKKER entered opposition, on the ground that he was already engaged to her. The Council ordered him to pay the injured lady a sum of money before the Secretary would be allowed to Undertrow him.

JONATHAN GRAVESANDE, the Commandeur of Demerara, died in 1761, and was succeeded by LAURENS LODIEWYK VAN BERCHEYCK, who seems to have pleased the Directors a great deal better than the private planters.

The English were by no means satisfied with the state of affairs in Demerara. GRAVESANDE, they thought, was well disposed towards the river, as was naturally to be expected, but the other Councillors were very jealous when they saw that Essequibo was being gradually distanced by its younger off-shoot. As for the Commandeur, he was almost despised. They could not respect a man who worked for a smaller salary than one of their overseers, while some of them were not backward in showing their disrespect, notwithstanding the penalties attached to the offense. To any one who is acquainted with the independent character of the Barbadian, it is easily conceivable what the natives of the little island thought of the slow and plodding Dutch planter and the Company's servants.

Notwithstanding the many hindrances, as well as the continual smuggling, however, the official returns of the exports show a gradual increase. In 1762, ten vessels arrived, and took away 2988 $\frac{1}{4}$ hhds. sugar, 43 brls. and 238 bags coffee, and 10 bales cotton.

CHAPTER VIII.

BERBICE AS A COLONY, 1735—1759.

The Association declares a dividend—Number of Plantations—Fort Nassau—New Amsterdam—The Governor's table—Waterham's report on the Colony—Predicant Frauendorff and the Church—Contemporary account of the Colony—Clearing a Plantation—Distribution of the estates—Indian trade—Fort wanted at the mouth of the river—Waterham discharged and succeeded by Lossner—Governor not to own an estate—Fort St. Andries erected—Lutheran Church—Quarrels and lawsuits—Lossner dismissed and succeeded by Colier—The new Governor's recommendations—Moravian Brethren—Officials and Manageresses—Council of Justice—Jews refused permission to settle—Colier succeeded by Ryswick—Riots and mutinies—The slave system—Land Regulations Taxes—The epidemic—Death of Governor Ryswick.

TWO years after the arrival of Governor WATERHAM, in August 1735, as a result of his energy and perseverance, the Berbice Association was, for the first time in ten years, able to declare a dividend of four per cent., and afterwards to pay three per cent. in each of the three following years. These profits were very little, but they appear to represent all the interest that the shareholders ever obtained from Berbice.

The Colony plantations were at this time twelve, nine being sugar, and the other three, coffee, cacao and cotton estates, all of them being supplied with provision grounds. Each of these was under the direction of a master planter, who was appointed by the Governor or the Association. From these Managers and the private planters, the Burgher Officers were chosen, whose duties were similar to those of the same officers in Essequibo. To regulate the colonial plantations a General Superintendent was

appointed, who, next to the Governor, held the most important office in the colony, and took the second place in the Council of Government. His duties were similar to those of an estate's attorney at the present time.

The private plantations numbered ninety-three in the Berbice river, and twenty in the Canje. Very few of these were of much importance, most of them having been lately established. The number of negro slaves being few, Indians were more generally utilised, but the private estates were far behind those of the Association.

Fort Nassau was built of wood, surrounded by palissades, and armed with small cannon. Inside were barracks for sixty soldiers, but there were rarely so many in the colony, and half of these generally occupied the Brandwagt and outposts. The principal building in the fort consisted of two floors, on the upper of which lived the Governor, Captain of the troops, the Secretary and two Lieutenants. On the first floor was a Council Chamber and Church hall. Within the palissades were also some outbuildings for servants and petty officials.

In the neighbourhood of the fort, and beyond it, a small village grew up very slowly, which was called New Amsterdam. It never became of much importance, but consisted of twenty to thirty huts, and about four larger houses, in which lived some of the white servants and mechanics, who could not be accommodated within the palissades. A little later, an inn was built, to provide lodgings for the new settlers, who became too many for the Governor's table, and found some difficulty in getting accommodation at private houses. It was called *The Land's Welfare*, ('s Lands Welvaren) and was conducted by a lessee of the Governor. It afterwards became a place of resort for the exchange of news and gossip, where the new arrivals were met and welcomed by their friends, and where the latest news from the fatherland was discussed. It was in fact a Colonial

Coffee House, of the type so common in the great cities of Europe at that time.

As in Essequibo, most of the officials received but small salaries in addition to their rations, while the Governor kept up his open table at the cost of the Association. This arrangement did not work very well in Berbice, the Governors generally being inclined to economise, probably under strict orders from the Directors. There being no shops other than the Colony Store, the little European community was, as it were, isolated in the same manner as if in a ship at sea, and not being under very strict discipline, plenty of little jealousies existed.

WATERHAM forwarded a report on Fort Nassau soon after his arrival, in which he declared it wanted renewal, and showed the necessity for another fortification near the mouth of the river. An engineer, JAN DANIEL KNAPP, who went to Berbice for the purpose of inspecting its defences, proposed Crab Island as the most suitable spot for the new fort, but the Directors thought it would be too expensive. The free planters were not satisfied, being afraid of another attack by French privateers, and in consequence they petitioned the Directors to provide proper defences, for which they offered to contribute a portion of the cost. Many of them, being Amsterdam merchants, could afford this, but the Association, from want of means, was unable to do anything.

On the 21st February, 1735, the Association resolved to impose a tax of 25 guilders per annum on each planter, to provide a Church fund, and in consequence, JOHANNES CHRISTIAN FRAUENDORFF was appointed Predicant of Berbice, on the 7th of June following. His salary was 900 guilders per annum, with a half cask of wine, an anker of brandy, and free board and lodging for himself, wife, daughter and maid servant. A choir-leader was also appointed at his recommendation, who was to act as sexton and schoolmaster

as well, on a salary of 300 guilders. A Church had been built at the mouth of the Wieronie Creek about twenty years before, but there had been great irregularity in the services, on account of the difficulty in getting Predicants at the small salaries hitherto offered.

The new Minister sailed for Berbice in July. He did not agree very well with the other officials, they complaining that he was intolerant, greedy and quarrelsome. At first he boarded with the Governor, but on account of his continual fault-finding, a house was provided near the Wieronie Church, where he went to reside, the Directors allowing him 800 guilders per annum in lieu of rations. He kept a private journal, from which he now and then extracted tit-bits of scandal, for the benefit of the Directors, who however would not listen to his stories, but repeatedly rebuked him for his fault-finding and want of Christian charity.

As in Essequibo, the established religion was the Reformed Church. FRAUENDORFF, by turns, preached at Fort Nassau and the Wieronie Church, and at rare intervals visited the Canje and distant plantations, to teach and baptise. Nothing whatever was done for the religious edification of the slaves, as the Directors, as well as the planters in general, thought it best to keep them ignorant. Both religion and morals were of a very low standard, but the churches were well attended, and the contributions came in without much difficulty. The Councils were always opened with prayers, thanksgiving services took place at regular intervals, and altogether there was a great show of piety, but like that of Europe generally at this period, only on the outside. There were a few Roman Catholics here as in Essequibo, but they were not allowed to belong to either Council, and were even objected to as common soldiers. The authorities feared, that in case of invasion by either France or Spain, the Catholics might refuse to fight against

those of their own religion. Even protestants, who did not belong to the Reformed Church, were objected to, while Jews could only settle by special permission of the Directors.

From a pamphlet * published at this time, nominally on Crab Island, to conceal its printer, some curious particulars may be gleaned concerning the voyage to Berbice and the preliminary work of a settler. It purports to be a letter, written by one of the emigrants soon after his arrival, and describes the appearance of the colony to a new-comer.

The letter opens with an account of the voyage and its privations, the passengers being almost starved, which, when it is taken into account that the Captain only received thirty guilders for passage and board, (about 20 cents a day) was not very wonderful. Arrived in the Berbice, he passes Crab Island, on which he says an engineer, who had come in the same vessel, intended to build a fort, which when properly manned and armed, he expected would be of great benefit to the colony. He then proceeds as follows :—

“The guard-house, (Brandwagt) is to be passed first, where is to be reported immediately what ship it is, and the vessel must lie there until permission is received from the Governor, after which the ship proceeds to Fort Nassau and enters, and the passengers are landed, who immediately hand over their papers to the Governor and Councillors. The latter then read over to the passengers the rules they are to observe, and at the same time administer the Oath of Allegiance to them, after which they go from the Council Hall to the wooden gallery, of what is really the Castle, to stretch their legs. A pipe of tobacco and some piwarree is offered you until dinner is ready, when you are honoured by dining with the Governor (who is a very friendly man) and his wife, together with the Gentlemen Councillors and other colonists present, when one is pretty well treated. The visitors are then thanked for their agreeable company, and are told to kindly see where they can be accommodated as there is no house-room here

*A voyage to Berbice in 1735. Translated and privately printed for N. DARNELL DAVIS in Demerara.

(which is really true), there being neither place, room, or tavern, where the passengers can remain for awhile, a thing very necessary at the fort. In the agreement, one is said to be allowed free lodging for three or four weeks, but that is untrue, so that one is compelled to go to one or another of the Company's or independent planters, to find accommodation for himself and goods, until his land has been allotted, and he has received his slaves—by which system not a little time is lost, especially as the slaves on hand are sick and unfit."

The writer then proceeds to say that he received his concession, which was situated at a distance from his first lodging, and found the land rich and good, after which he describes the work before him:—

"Just imagine that you see before you a tract of land covered with trees, which are cut down by negroes: close to them stands their officer, who encourages, and at the same time, instructs them how they must work. On one side is the under-planter, (overseer) who is busy having the land ploughed, and afterwards planted up, to whose assistance the manager comes three or four times a day, inspecting everything, and giving orders wherever necessary. Then my gentleman goes home and calls his slaves with horn and bell to breakfast. Officer and assistant follow, who then find coffee and breakfast ready, and after that return to their work, taking half an hour's rest in the morning and one hour during the afternoon. In the meantime the *baas* must look after the kitchen and take care that the food is not burnt, and that the plates are properly cleaned, otherwise he runs a chance of being dismissed."

He concludes by telling his correspondent, that he wanted a woman who could sew, to act as housekeeper, also a surgeon and a carpenter. The colony began to be what he called peopled, a vessel having lately arrived with twenty-two passengers, which increased the number to sixty planters. A good doctor, apothecary and surgeon, were wanted, but they must not imagine that houses and other conveniences existed already. They would have to live in a wilderness, and build wooden castles covered with leaves, which would hardly suit a Dutchman used to luxury. A great many Frenchmen had arrived lately, who did not get on very well with the Indians.

The engineer, JAN DANIEL KNAPP, who surveyed Crab Island to find out its suitability for a fort, recom-

mended a position on the east shore a little below the island as an alternative. He published a map,* shewing the plantations, their names, and the names of their owners, embellished with the arms of the Directors. The nearest plantation to the mouth of the river was *Mesopotamia*, there being nothing below this except the Brandwagt. From the first plantation, upward to the last, a small place called Magdalena, a little beyond Savonetta, there were ninety-three estates, besides those of the Association, in addition to which there were twenty in the upper Canje. About a fourth of these belonged to Frenchmen, or persons of French extraction. It does not appear that the Governor possessed any land, but there was one plantation belonging to HENDRIK WATERHAM, perhaps a brother or other relation. There was a path across the savannah leading to the Canje, where the post still existed, and several other paths which were used as short cuts from the back of one plantation to another.

Besides the post in the Canje, there were two others in the Wieronie and upper Berbice, the latter going under the name of the Accaway post. Here the Indian trade was carried on as in Essequibo. The authorities were rather particular as to selling fire-arms to the Indians, but as there was little demand for these, the matter was of small importance. The bows and blow-pipes of the natives were almost equal to the clumsy muskets, with which they had not yet become expert. The Governor was continually charged to do his utmost to keep on friendly terms with the Indians, and not to allow them to be badly treated by the planters, or to permit any interference in their quarrels. The regulations as to Indians of the Berbice river not being slaves, and their not being taken away from the colony, were very stringent,

* Naukeurige Platte Grond van den Staat en den hoop van Rio de Berbice—door den Ingenieur Jan Dani. Knapp.

only those brought from the far interior being allowed to be sold. The system of giving them presents was commenced about this time, but it had not yet attained to much importance, these gifts consisting of rewards for catching runaway slaves, and now and then a silver necklace to one of the Chiefs, for special services.

In the course of the next five years, the inhabitants of Berbice were continually demanding that a Fort should be erected near the mouth of the river, in accordance with the fourth Article of the Charter. The free planters offered to pay two-thirds of the cost, if the Association would contribute the remainder, but although this was agreed to nothing was done. The profits were so small that the Directors told the Governor they were not satisfied, and he must try his very utmost to get better returns from the plantations. At last they became so dissatisfied, that in 1740, they discharged WATERHAM, on the plea that he was wanting in energy, and too free with his subordinates, which latter caused a lot of petty jealousies.

The new Governor, ANDRIES LOSSNER, who was appointed on the 6th of April 1740, had been General Superintendent of the Colony plantations, and given great satisfaction while holding that office. His salary was fixed at 1500 guilders per annum, with five per cent. on the sales of coffee and cacao, two per cent. on store goods, five guilders on each slave and three on each horse imported, together with free rations and wine. His Instructions were similar to those of WATERHAM, and in addition he was forbidden to possess an estate or have a share in one. This prohibition, the Directors told him in December following, they thought it right to enforce, to prevent damaging their own interests. As in Essequibo, this matter caused a great deal of trouble; the Directors might give their orders, but it was very easy for a Governor to be interested in an estate without his name appearing as one of the owners. It was not until

1758 that the obnoxious rule was abolished, and the Governor, Secretary, Vendue Master and Land Surveyor, were allowed to possess estates. The wife of LOSSNER was a daughter of Commandeur GELSKERKE of Essequibo, and friendly relations were kept up between the two colonies. During his government the fort near the mouth of the river was at last erected and named St. Andries, but on account of the want of money, it was utterly useless as a protection to the colony.

In 1744, a number of Lutherans living in Berbice, petitioned the Directors for permission to build a Church and procure a Predicant at their own expense. The Directors hesitated in allowing this, as they did not see the necessity for another Church, especially when the points of difference between the two sects were so small. As however they could not well refuse, as long as it cost them nothing, they at last consented, on condition that a modest, truthful and peaceable Minister be chosen. A Church and Parsonage were then built at New Amsterdam, near Fort Nassau, and a Predicant named J. H. FARKENIUS arrived in 1752.

On account of the number of disputes among the inhabitants, the Directors, in 1748, appointed Justices of the Peace (*Vrederechters*) to adjudicate on matters where the amount in dispute was below a hundred guilders. In accordance with the Charter, civil justice was then administered by the Council of Justice, and criminal, by the Council of Government. Both of these courts consisted of planters and officials, without any legal advisers, and consequently their decisions were often disputed, and appeals made to the Directors, who sometimes told the Councils that their decisions were against the simplest rules of law and justice. The time of the Councils was wasted so much by the number of quarrels and fights, that the Governor was directed to prevent protracted suits by arbitrary decisions. At this time the Governor acted as Fiscal or public prosecutor, as

well as President of the Court, which could hardly be conducive to unbiassed decisions. When it is considered, that the population of Berbice was only about two hundred, (excluding slaves), it would naturally be supposed, that there would be very little work for Courts of Justice, but instead of this, we find plenty of both civil and criminal cases. As for the slaves, only their most flagrant crimes came before the Council, and these were quickly settled.

Governor LOSSNER did not get on much better than his predecessor. The fact was the Directors wanted profits, and having been unable to declare a dividend since 1738, were naturally very dissatisfied. Then, the Governor did not agree with his successor in the office of General Superintendent, HENDRIK BLANKENBURG, who probably would not listen to the advice of one who had already filled that post, and thought himself able to superintend the Superintendent. At last, the dispute became so hot that the Governor discharged BLANKENBURG, and sent him back to the Netherlands, where he succeeded in putting his case before the Directors in such a manner, that they reinstated him, and dismissed LOSSNER on the 2nd of May 1749.

He was succeeded by JAN FREDERIK COLIER, who had been a Military Officer in Surinam for five years, and who was ordered to demand a strict account of the state of affairs from LOSSNER, and to send him to the Netherlands, and, if he should try to abscond, to arrest him. The new Governor found the colony in a very poor state, and, hearing of the development of Essequibo and Demerara, owing to the ten years freedom of taxes, he wanted to introduce the same system in Berbice. He told the Directors that the colony wanted more people, as well as help in the shape of a bank or system of credit, by which money could be procured to open up the plantations. As some of the Colony plantations did not pay, he thought it would be better to rent them out to private persons. On account of

the many legal cases, he recommended that a lawyer should be appointed, to act as Captain of the Troops and Fiscal, who would have a seat in the Council, but this was thought inadmissible on account of the Charter. A "Code Noir," the governor considered, ought also to be introduced, in which provision should be made for compensation for slaves brought to justice, as the poorer people tried to protect their negroes from arrest, for fear of losing their services. Fort Nassau was very weak and quite useless as a defence, while Fort St. Andries was only fit to take account of incoming vessels. These defences ought to be put in proper order, and another fort built at the mouth of the Abary, to watch the movements of the Caribs, and trade with the Indians generally. The provisions sent out were very bad, which tended to produce sickness among the slaves. The soldiers had to pay back the expenses of their passage in two years, so that they were very poor during that time; the Governor thought they should be sent out free, and have their wages paid in cash, instead of drafts.

About this time we first find references to the Moravian Brethren. In 1735 some missionaries had gone to Surinam, and three years later two of them went to Berbice, at the request of an Amsterdam merchant, for the purpose of attending to the religious instruction of his slaves. They were however looked upon with suspicion by the Directors and planters, and repeated orders were given to the Governors, to keep their eyes upon them, and, at the first sign of an attempt to influence the negroes or Indians, in any way that might be detrimental to the interests of the colony, to send them back to Europe. The missionaries received no salaries, but worked for their own livings at various handicrafts. They petitioned to be exempted from certain taxes, and also from taking oaths, but they were refused any particular liberties, the Directors stating that only Menonites could be allowed exemption from oaths. Many of

the Brethren came to Berbice at different times, some remaining, but others leaving for the West Indies to teach in the different colonies. An Indian Mission was established up the Wieronie Creek, where the community numbered three hundred in 1757. Little could be done for the slaves in Berbice, on account of the opposition of both Government and planters, but these Missionaries were more successful in Surinam. They always did their best to teach the slaves to be "subject to the powers that be," and to "obey their masters in all things," never giving the slightest encouragement to insubordination. The Predicants were very jealous of them, encouraging the opposition of the planters, and even the Directors feared that their influence with the Indians might lessen the good feeling which existed between them and the colonists.

BLANKENBURG, the General Superintendent who had caused the dismissal of LOSSNER, was reprimanded in 1751 for his continual disputes with ABRAHAM WIJS, the Secretary. He died in 1758, and his widow retained the office for two years, a thing which appears to have been allowed at this time, as two widows are mentioned as Manageresses of the Colony plantations.* WIJS the Secretary performed the duties of Fiscal, but when, in 1755, he was appointed Vendue Master, the new Officer, SPEELMAN received a Commission as Secretary and Fiscal, the latter being succeeded by HARKENBOTH, an Amsterdam Advocate, in 1760. As we shall see later, the last gentleman, although the first proper legal practitioner in Berbice, turned out to be of little account as a *man*, whatever he may have been as a lawyer.

The Council of Justice was bound by oath, to decide in accordance with, first, the laws of the Colony, second, the laws and customs of the Fatherland, and last the Roman

* According to the Chart of Ottens, 1740, Widow van Weiningen was then manager of Vryheid, Widow Balk, of Markey, and Widow van Doorn, of Vlissengen. |

law. As the Colonial ordinances or placats were rather municipal than civil or judicial, the laws of the Fatherland were officially adopted, and no arbitrary decisions to the contrary were allowed, nor were the laws of other places to be followed. The practice was ordered to be shortened as much as possible, simple justice being administered, in accordance with the practice of the Fatherland, and the laws of the country districts of the Province of Holland, but not of the high court, as that was too elaborate in its forms. The Councillors were directed to be very careful in passing sentences, as there was no appeal in the colony, while that to their High Mightinesses was not convenient, on account of the expense, trouble and delay, involved.

In 1750 and 1752 the Directors received applications from certain Jews, to be permitted to settle in Berbice, but these were refused. The following year however, JOSEPH DE LA PENJA and ABON JACOB DE PRADO, Jewish merchants of Amsterdam, applied on behalf of thirteen Jews with better prospects of success. They wanted land between the Brandwagt and the mouth of the river, 1000 acres for each, to plant coffee and sugar, and to be allowed religious freedom and equal privileges with the other colonists, also a piece of land for a synagogue and burial ground, as well as a notary who understood the Portuguese language. The Directors thought at first that such a number of new settlers would add much to the importance of the colony, but when they found that the people were almost destitute, having neither slaves nor money to buy them, they refused permission. Similar requests were made in 1759 and 1762, but in each case they were refused. Notwithstanding the objections to a Jewish colony, there was no prohibition against individual Jews, several plantations being owned by them.

Governor COLIER seems to have got on very well in Berbice, but on his applying for leave of absence, he was super-

seded on the 20th of October 1753, by HENDRIK JAN VAN RYSWICK. Under his government attempts were made, by strict regulations, to put down insubordination among the soldiers and the general laxity that existed throughout the colony. Notwithstanding his efforts, however, things went from bad to worse. There were riots and murders among the soldiers at Fort Nassau in 1751, 1756 and 1759, and slave troubles in 1749 and 1752, all of which were put down with a very high hand, and punished by torture and horrible executions, whether the offenders were black or white.

The planters of Berbice and Surinam, have often been quoted as examples of cruelty to slaves, especially by the party agitators for abolition and emancipation. That there were cases of what we should now call horrible brutality, there is not the slightest doubt, but that they were specially cruel to negroes is not borne out by the evidence. As far as can be gleaned, there does not appear to have been any distinction in law, although it would be too much to expect that a tribunal of planters would be much more just to negroes, than a bench of game-preserving Magistrates to poachers. There was always a natural tendency to punishments that did not seriously injure the slave as a working animal, and this was his great protection. The authorities frequently reprimanded the planters, for not bringing their slaves to justice, for even after compensation was allowed in cases where negroes were executed, the amounts granted very rarely represented their full value.

The system that grew up on the plantations, was the result of experience of the powers and capabilities of the negro, as well as of the examples before the planters in the army and navy, where men were kept in subordination by identical measures. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the negroes were naturally cruel, as thousands of instances go to prove, and it may be positively affirmed, that the management of a plantation under a good master

showed administrative ability of a very high order. Slavery was bad as a system, but not anything like so black as it was painted. Slave riots were common all over the West Indies, and so were mutinies on board ship, both arising from similar causes. The soldiers at Fort Nassau and in Surinam revolted when put on short allowances, and so did the slaves on the plantations, but the difference of the two is shown in the horrible atrocities committed by the latter, who seemed to lose all semblance of humanity. It is not safe however to generalise too far, as there were continual examples of fidelity in all the slave revolts, some of these standing out in brilliant contrast to the surrounding horrors.

On the 16th of April, 1757, the Regulations for Land Grants were revised by the Directors and then ran as follows :—

Act of Vergunning and attached Regulations for the granting of land in Berbice.

The Directors of the Chartered Colony of Berbice, *cum annexis*, situated on the great Coast of Guiana, in America, grant and concede, and therefore authorise the Governor and Council of that Colony, for and on account of M. ———— to allot such lands as they themselves, or their agents at the place, shall select, and as may be agreed upon by the Governor and Council, in full and free ownership, for planting, to the number of ———— acres, under the following conditions :—

That they shall be bound to pay the price of ten guilders per acre* for the free ownership thereof, and yearly, as a contribution to the Church, one stiver per acre, whether cultivated or uncultivated ; and further be bound to conduct themselves in accordance with the Charter of their High Mightinesses, of the 6th December 1732, as well as with all the Regulations as to land grants, published by the Directors, and here annexed. Done at Amsterdam the ————

REGULATIONS.

1. No person shall be permitted to take possession of any land, either to cut wood or cultivate the ground, unless he first receives permission from the Directors, and the Governor and Council are bound to make the grant

* By Resolution 1774. in ten instalments.

and receive the money within twelve months, on pain of confiscation of everything, and restitution for any timber that may have been cut.

2. Permission having been obtained, the applicant shall, by the first opportunity, send it to the colony, and exhibit it at the first meeting of the Governor and Council, so that it may be registered, on pain of a fine, or loss of the permission.

3. Registration having been made, the Governor and Council will regulate the surveying and paaling off of the land, in presence of the interested parties, and the survey must be finished within six months by a Sworn Land Surveyor.

4. The survey being finished, the Surveyor shall supply an act of measurement to the Secretary of the colony that it may be approved by the Governor and Council, and the party receiving the grant shall be bound to pay two stivers per acre for the survey.

5. The Surveyor must make three charts, containing specific boundary lines and paals, as well as the courses of the rivers ; one of these must be given to the receiver of the grant, another to the Secretary, for registration within three months, and the third, for approval to the Governor and Council, and the receiver will be bound to pay a fee of one stiver per acre for these Charts, and if not ready and delivered in time a fine of £25 will be imposed.

6. The owner shall, as soon as possible, receive a proper transport at his own cost, giving all necessary information, which must be deposited with the Secretary.

7. Every person will be allowed to choose his land, as long as this can be done without inconvenience to others, but always with the knowledge of the Governor and Council, who will consult the Surveyor-General and Land-Surveyor, and if any objections are made the matter may be referred to the Directors.

8. No one will be allowed to have a broader façade than is required for his work, and never more than 27 *kettingen* (148½ roods).

9. The Land Surveyor must take care that proper paals be placed, to show the landmarks and prevent confusion, he must mention them in his act of measurement as well as in the chart, and the receiver of the grant shall be bound to keep the paals in order and not to remove them, on pain of arbitrary correction, and the Land Surveyor of the colony shall always be at liberty to inspect them.

10. For the better separation of different estates, neighbouring grounds shall not be given to the same owner, and should two plantations come together, a piece one chain in breadth shall be left between them ; this piece of ground to be at the disposal of the Directors, the planters not being allowed to cut wood or have slave or provision grounds thereon, or interfere with it in any way without consent of the Directors, not even by agreement

between the two estates shall anything be done thereon, on pain of arbitrary correction, or a fine of at least double the value of the damage, as it may be estimated by the Governor.

11. Land Surveyors must pay attention to the interests of the Directors in laying out the land, so that the estates may be economically distributed; the divisions must be made in such a way, that by the winding of the rivers and creeks they shall not encroach on each other either back or front.

12. In case of creeks or waters flowing through estates, neither the owners or other persons shall be permitted to dam or obstruct them, either directly or indirectly; free fishing shall however be allowed as far as the estate extends, but no farther, except by special permission of the Governor; in any case fishing must be carried on without obstructing the creeks, on pain of arbitrary correction.

13. In future, no person commencing an estate shall ask for or receive more than 500 acres, unless he mentions that he is about to grow sugar, when 1,000 acres will be granted, but no more, unless the Directors shall, for particular reasons, make special provisions.

14. Immediately after receiving permission, and when the measurement is finished, the planter must commence the cultivation, so that in 18 months from the date of the survey there shall be erected thereon a proper dwelling house, on pain of losing his concession, and the grant reverting to the Directors, the planter will further be required to pay for any wood that may be cut, unless in a special case of fire, death, or disaster the Governor should extend the time.

15. Owners of sugar estates will be bound to erect and put in working order a mill and boiling-house within five years, on pain of confiscation of the land and all cultivations that may be on it.

16. For each 500 acres given out in the lower manicle grounds, the planter will be bound to have ten slaves, and for the upper clay land eight slaves.

17. To enforce these regulations the fiscal is ordered to give attention to their observance and proceed against all who may act to the contrary.

The taxes were regulated in 1758 by Governor RYSWICK. Hitherto they had consisted of head-money, church-money, weigh-money, tonnage duties, and flag money; these were now increased by stamp duties, customs duties on imports, licenses for butchers and bakers, and a tax on drink. The last was the only one that gave much in the way of revenue, wines and spirits being then considered necessary to health in hot climates.

About this time began the "sickness," as it was called, which proved so disastrous to both white and black, and probably was the cause of that weakness which was so deplorable in the trouble that followed. It is uncertain whether it was a fever or dysentery, but it is most probable that the slaves suffered from the latter, while the Europeans were struck down by a malarial fever. The surgeons were quite unable to cope with the sickness, so that the slaves died in great numbers, and their masters, if they recovered were left in a very weak condition. In 1758 and 1759, the Predicant, the General Superintendent and his son, and a number of lesser officials and soldiers, all died of the epidemic, while to add to the trouble, it carried off Governor RYSWICK, on September 21st of the latter year.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BERBICE SLAVE INSURRECTION, 1760—1767.

Appointment of Governor Hoogenheim—His efforts to improve the colony—Slave revolt on two plantations—Population of the colony—Commencement of the great insurrection—Sessions of the Council—Cowardice of the Burghers and Ship Captains—Fort Nassau unable to stand against an attack—Burghers clamorous for permission to leave—Massacre at Peereboom—Dishonourable behaviour of the Secretary—Resolution to abandon Fort Nassau—The fort abandoned and burnt—The inhabitants proceed to Plantation Dageraad—One of the vessels abandons Dageraad—Resolution to proceed to Fort St. Andries—Arrival at the fort—Difficulties of the position—Troubles with the Secretary—Two captains leaving—Troops arrive from Surinam—Return to Dageraad—Attack of the rebels—Letter from Coffy, the rebel chief—Story of the chief's messenger—Rewards offered to the troops—Repulse of the rebels—Sickness at Dageraad—Indians from Demerara harass the negroes—Mutiny at the Corentyne post—Captain Hattinga's mad freak—News of the disaster reaches the Netherlands—Help sent—Quarrels among the negroes—Great expedition to entirely suppress the revolt—Arrival of a large contingent of troops—Skirmishing with the negroes—Negroes begin to surrender—Insurrection entirely suppressed—Trial and execution of the ringleaders—Troops leave—Ruin of the colony—Difficulties in re-establishing the plantations—The Governor resigns—John Heyliger appointed—Unsatisfactory state of affairs—Heyliger resigns.

THERE was some difficulty in procuring another Governor for Berbice after the death of RYSWICK on account of the epidemic, but at last the Directors succeeded in engaging WOLFEET SIMON VAN HOOGENHEIM, who received his commission on the 21st of March 1763. He was a man of some energy, and when sorely tried, showed himself to be the bravest in the colony. He

departed for Berbice in September, taking with him E. F. HARKENBOTH, as Fiscal and Secretary, M. SCHOOK, as Book-keeper and General Superintendent, two Lieutenants, J. W. PRONK and G. THIELEN, and a few minor officials. On his arrival, in November, he found the colony very weak and languishing from the sickness, which he discovered to his cost was no bugbear, as his wife died of it almost immediately afterwards.

HOOGENHEIM commenced to put things in order at once. He tried to cheer the desponding planters, and wrote to the Directors, giving his ideas as to how matters might be improved. The sickness among the colony slaves, he thought, proceeded from bad food, he therefore proposed that they should be supplied with rations of beef and pork, as was done on some of the private plantations. His subordinates were a poor lot; Land-Surveyor HATTINGA was a drunkard, Predicant RAMRING interfered in government business, while Secretary HARKENBOTH and Orphan-Master WIJS, were both careless, negligent and debauched. New regulations were also wanted to induce immigration, including ten years freedom from taxes.

The Directors listened to these recommendations, altered the land laws, gave the offending gentlemen severe reprimands, praised the Governor for his care and attention to their interests, and to encourage him in his praiseworthy conduct, sent him a present of six hundred guilders. The open table was now abolished, allowances being made to each official, of either rations or increased salaries. As may be supposed these changes did not conduce to much cordiality between the Governor and his subordinates, which accounts for that want of sympathy so conspicuous in the troubles that followed.

A disturbance took place on the 5th of July 1762, at Plantations *Goedland* and *Goed Fortuin* in the upper Berbice, belonging to LAURENS KUNCKLER. Thirty-six slaves took ad-

vantage of the absence of their master, who, being a Councillor, had gone to Fort Nassau to attend a meeting, to free themselves from all restraint. They plundered the house of everything they cared for, including some muskets and ammunition, and, after setting it on fire, escaped to the bush, then passing the Accaway Post, they frightened away the Post-holder, who brought the news to the Governor. HOOGENHEIM, at once sent some soldiers to the post, and later, fitted up the government boat with sand-bags along the bulwarks, to cruise up and down the river. The Burghers were called out, and the Governor went to the plundered estates, as well as to *Savonette*, where he took precautions to prevent any trouble on that estate. The runaways went four hours into the bush, where they cut down trees and erected a formidable barricade. Lieutenant THEILEN followed them in command of a party of soldiers and Militia, but the negroes were so well protected, that they succeeded in killing two and wounding five of the party. The Burghers were not brave enough to make an assault, but were so discomfited that they ran away. A few days later however, the negroes were enticed from their defences, and most of them killed, while two or three prisoners were taken, one of whom was executed, while the others were flogged in the presence of the slaves from the neighbourhood.

In 1762 the population of Berbice numbered, according to the official returns, excluding the free Indians, 346 whites, 244 Indian slaves, and 3,833 negro slaves, making a total of 4,423. There were at Fort Nassau and New Amsterdam, 30 European officers and officials of all grades, and 150 negro and 10 Indian slaves ; on the Colony plantations, 40 whites, 1,061 negro and 30 Indian slaves ; on the 84 private estates, 216 European 2,622 negro and 204 Indian slaves ; besides these there were 60 soldiers, stationed at Fort Nassau, Fort St. Andries, the Brandwagt, and the posts.

As the number of slaves is taken from the official records, these being drawn up from the returns for assessing head taxes, it is probably a little under the mark, we may therefore conclude that the population amounted to a few hundred more, especially when it is taken into account that a few settlers had received the ten years exemption from taxes, and therefore would not appear in the register. These figures are important in connection with what followed, showing as they do, that the slaves outnumbered the whites in the proportion of more than eleven to one. Two slave vessels arrived before the insurrection, while a few deaths among the whites increased the disparity of numbers. The force at command to defend the colony, consisted of a Colonel, Captain, two Lieutenants, a Gunner, a Surgeon-Major and eighteen surgeons, four Sergeants, three Constables, and seven post-holders, besides the sixty soldiers, about half of whom were on the sick list. Besides these, every white man in the colony belonged to the Burgher Militia, which consisted of four companies, three in the Berbice and one in the Canje. Like the soldiers, many of these were either sick, or else weak convalescents, broken down in both body and mind.

The colony of Surinam then included what is now a part of Berbice, the boundary being the Devil's Creek, and on the west bank of the Corentyne was situated an outpost of that colony, somewhere in the neighbourhood of what is now Orealla.

The great insurrection of 1763, was probably the most disastrous slave revolt that ever occurred in any colony. How it was brought about is very doubtful, but it is certain that it originated on one or two estates in the Canje, from whence it spread like wildfire through the whole colony.

It appears from the Governor's letter to the Directors, that on the 21st of February 1763, the slaves on two plantations in the Canje revolted, murdering two Chris-

tians and three slaves, and then, to the number of about a hundred and fifty, ran away to the Corentyne, from whence they made raids, and incited the slaves of the other plantations to follow them.

From an account in a contemporary pamphlet,* it appears that, during the riot of the previous year, some of the negroes had noticed the smallness of the force that could be brought against them, while the inhabitants had also seen that the slaves were in a state of unrest, and expected something dreadful would happen. No one could give a reason for the revolt, but it commenced in the Canje in a secret manner, the first rioters killing all who might have given warning to the other planters. All the estates in the upper Canje were plundered and the whites murdered, those who defended themselves being chopped in pieces in sight of other prisoners. There being no successful opposition, all the negroes banded together, to the number of nine hundred, and marched through the path from the Canje to Fort Nassau, coming out at the Huis Dageraat in New Amsterdam, before the slightest rumour had reached Berbice. Why the Canje post-holder, who appears to have escaped, did not send news to the Governor, is unknown, probably he was too frightened to move. On the appearance of this clamorous troop of fiends, there was a general stampede, everyone in the neighbourhood trying to escape to Fort Nassau, while those who delayed were barbarously murdered by the rebels. The colonists were in a state of fear and horror, while the negroes spread from plantation to plantation, continually increasing their numbers and plundering one house after another. Of the whites, some took refuge in Fort Nassau, others in the house at Peereboom; a few went down the river to Fort St. Andries, while most of the women and children were put on board four vessels which

* Kortbondige Beschryving van de Colonie de Berbice, 1768.

lay in the river. It was rumoured that the Lutheran Pre-dicant being unable to escape, had barricaded his doors and tried to reason with them from the windows, but they set fire to the house and murdered him as he was coming out. Some of the fugitives took to the savannah, where they wandered about helplessly, and were either starved, or killed by the rebels when caught.

No attempt was made to attack the Fort, the negroes being engaged in plundering and burning the plantations, so that from the 27th of February, when the rebels first appeared from the Canje, to the 2nd of March, the Governor was busy in making provision for the refugees and trying to put the place in order for defence. The Council of Government met on the 2nd of March, and, during the troubles, was almost continually in session. The Governor reported at this meeting, that on Sunday the 27th of February, the slaves on *Hollandia* and *Lilienburg* had revolted, and that Burgher-Captain LENTZENG, on hearing the news, sent round a circular calling the Militia to assemble at *Mon Repos* and *Rozenburg*, next to *Hollandia*. The Captain and a few Burghers went there, but had not the courage to attack, or do anything against the rebels, but on the contrary, they ran away to *Solitude*, abandoning the Plantations to the negroes. On the last estate they had found Councillor ABBENSETTS, who sent a letter to him, (the Governor) asking for help to defend *Solitude*. He at once ordered Captain KOCK, of the slave-ship *Adriana Petronella*, to proceed up the river, which the Captain agreed to do on the 28th on receiving a Commission. The vessel left the same day, but to the Governor's surprise he received a letter from ABBENSETTS, informing him that, instead of going up the river, KOCK had anchored before *Zublies Lust* and *Fortuyn*. Upon which he had written to KOCK, ordering him to proceed at once up the river, but to the Governor's great pain and dis-

pleasure the Captain still remained in the same place. There had been no news from Captain LENTZENG up to that morning, but he expected that he was with ABBENSETTS. Information had just been received, that all the estates from that of ABBENSETTS to the Church, had been pillaged and destroyed.

Only twenty soldiers were in the Fort, and eight of these were sick, the Burghers were few and weak, and as for the ship of Captain PYNAPPEL, she had very few men, and was unable to render much assistance. The Governor asked the Council to deliberate on the means of assisting the inhabitants, and as to what should be done under the circumstances.

The Councillors declared that the Burgher Captain and some of his men had behaved in a most cowardly manner; they had remained at *Zublie's Lust* near the slave ship, doing nothing, while ABBENSETTS had kept his post at *Solitude* with a very few men, and the negroes dared not attack them. ABBENSETTS wanted the vessel to go up the river to assist him, but Captain KOCK had declared his intention of turning back.

After deliberation, the Council asserted that they had no means of helping ABBENSETTS; they had given orders to the Burghers, but these were not obeyed. All they could do was, to commission Councillor GILLISEN to go to the Burghers, and try by all possible means, to induce them to assist ABBENSETTS, and at the same time earnestly implore Captain KOCK to go up the river.

The Councillors had inspected Fort Nassau, and found the defences in a very bad state. They had asked the advice of the Military Officers, who told them that the fort might stand a first attack, but they must, by all means leave a way of retreat to the vessels. The Captains RAMBLO and PYNAPPEL, were called in, and asked to keep their vessels in a position to help in case of an assault by the

rebels, and also to afford means of escape as a last resort, which they promised to do.

On March 3rd ABBENSETTS appeared in person, having come down the river to see why the slave ship had not gone up, or the Burghers arrived to his assistance. He had heard that the latter were marching towards him, but they had not arrived, and he had come to implore all possible assistance in his critical position. On deliberation, the Council passed an Act of Guarantee against all damage that the ships might sustain, and gave a Commission to ABBENSETTS to act with all the power and authority of the Council, in making arrangements with the Captain.

On the 6th ABBENSETTS returned and reported that he had found Captain KOCK at the same place, and had gone on board, asking him why he did not proceed up the river. In reply the officers and crew began to make a lot of objections, which he at last overcame by promises of rewards of three hundred guilders to each man, and 25 guilders per head for each rebel, dead or alive, and also that in case the vessel should be lost their wages would be paid, while wounds would be compensated for according to the maritime laws. ABBENSETTS had then gone back to his post, and offered the Burghers 25 guilders for each rebel dead or alive. He had expected, with the help of the vessel, to suppress the revolt and relieve *Peereboom*, where many of the Burghers were surrounded, but to his grief he had been informed that Captain KOCK only came one hour farther up the river, and dropped anchor before *Oostermeer*, his people being unwilling to go beyond this. On the urgent request of Mr. SCHIRMEESTER, KOCK drifted a little farther up the river, but again stopped short of *Solitude*. The rebels were now to be heard on *Friendship*, and the faithful negroes were getting frightened. At midnight, news arrived that the rebels had captured *Peereboom* and murdered all the Christians. On receipt of these tidings the few Burghers who had re-

mained with ABBENSETTS got frightened, and he had to declare that they were at liberty to do what they liked, on which they fled to the Fort, and Captain KOCK also returned with his vessel. He feared now that all the plantations would be destroyed. His slaves had shown great fidelity, but being now left alone, he expected they would follow the others, as he had noticed signs of a desire to join in the revolt.

Predicant RAMBING then arrived with his wife, and gave an account of what had happened on *Peereboom*. There were present at the house, Mr. J. C. GEORGE, with his wife and children, Mr. A. ZUBLI, and other ladies and gentlemen, to the number of twenty. On Thursday the 4th, they had resisted two attacks of the rebels, who shot at the house, the Burghers being successful in defending it. One of the negroes called out when the firing had ceased, "we are men, and have fourteen barrels of powder yet, and you shall not leave the estate!" Thereupon a council was held by the besieged, who were of opinion that it would not be right to leave the estate, but what were they to do? They were surrounded, and saw no signs of assistance from the slave vessel or otherwise, while they would soon be wanting food and water. Thereupon Mr. GEORGE asked one of the negroes, why they behaved in such a shocking manner? He answered that the Christians were cruel to them; they did not wish to have any whites in the colony; they would be gentlemen themselves; all the estates were theirs, and they must be given up. There was then a truce, which lasted until next day, when it was agreed between the two parties that the whites should be allowed to leave in the boats and go down the river unmolested. The whites then left the house, and were in the act of embarking, when the negroes opened fire upon them, from their own boats, as well as from the shore, killing most of them, only two or three managing to swim across the river and escaping into the bush.

On hearing the Predicant's story, the Governor said that the state of things was most deplorable, the rebels were getting worse from day to day, and there was nothing going on but murders and conflagrations. He now asked the Council what could possibly be done to save the colony.

The members resolved to again inspect the fort, which they did very carefully, and found it indefensible, the palisades near the ground being quite rotten, especially at the back, where it was most open to assault by the negroes. They expected that, if a few pieces of cannon were fired, the palissades would fall away, and the fort be exposed, which, being covered with shingles, might easily be set on fire. The agility of the negroes in climbing was so well known, that there would be no difficulty, even if the palisades were not torn away, in their getting over them. There were no water tanks or wells inside the fort, and therefore, in case of fire, they could procure no water to put it out. It was so badly situated, that it could be easily surrounded, while they could not prevent the negroes from going down the river, and cutting off their chance of escape in that direction.

After consultation with the engineers and Burgher officers, the report was put in writing, to the effect that Fort Nassau was in such a condition that it could not be defended, all the cannon were also defective, some of them having been spiked, while the back of the fort was entirely indefensible, so that they could only make a stand on one side. The inhabitants were very few and weak, some of them having never handled a musket, so they could hardly be expected to stand against even one attack.

The Governor informed the Council that he had written to Surinam for assistance, for which act of forethought they thanked him.

After some deliberation, it was resolved to order all the inhabitants, including the Burghers, who had already gone

on board the four vessels, to come into the fort, and not leave again without permission. The Captains of these vessels were then called, and asked to give assistance in case the rebels attacked the fort, and also to try and prevent the negroes from going down the river to the lower Canje. Captains KOOK and RAMELO promised to do their best, but the mate of Captain LAURENSEN's vessel said that his twelve men were too weak to do anything, while Captain PYNAPPEL said his men were also weak and sick, and as he had orders to proceed to St. Eustatius, he could not wait there any longer.

It was resolved that the Captains should be ordered to keep themselves in readiness, and as for Captain PYNAPPEL he must not think of leaving, but they would give him eight Burghers to help his sick crew in working the vessel.

The Governor then stated, that, on account of the increase of the people and the great number of faithful slaves who had taken refuge in the fort, they would very soon be in want of provisions.

From the lower Canje, news now arrived, that the negroes there had commenced to revolt, and the Secretary was directed to write and give the inhabitants tidings of the late distressing events, telling them, in case of necessity, to retire to the coast, but on no account to attempt to come overland to Fort Nassau.

It was finally resolved to defend the fort for the present, but in case the rebels should pass to the lower Canje the matter would have to be reconsidered.

Secretary HARKENBOTH having been asked why he had not brought the Minute Book at the present session, told the Council that it had been packed and put on board Captain PYNAPPEL's ship, where he was at present stopping with his wife. Hearing this, Councillor ABBENSETTS said he was astonished that the Secretary should abandon his post; it was his duty to be near and with the Governor at this

critical time, and to do everything in his power to assist him. The Secretary said he had not been idle but had plenty of work. "What work?" said ABBENSETTS. "Oh, always something to do," said the Secretary. Being asked if he did not respect his oath, and if he was not receiving his wages and allowances, he replied, "I can't get enough for myself and wife, and don't feel bound to stand here and be shot at for twenty guilders a month."

The following day, Monday, March 7th, business was commenced by reading a petition from the Burghers. After reviewing the condition of the fort, they requested permission to go on board the vessels, as the rebels were coming nearer and nearer, and the neighbouring plantations were now burning. The Burgher and Military Officers, were then called, who agreed with the petitioners, saying that their position was dangerous, as many of the fugitives were sick from the privations and fatigue of their flight through bush and savannah.

The Council answered, that they would decide next day, as they hardly knew what to do, for unless assistance came from the fatherland, which would take a long time, they could not remain there.

A letter from the lower Canje was then read, in which it was stated that the negroes were in a state of discontent, and ready to join the rebels on the first opportunity.

Later on the same day, the Governor stated, that the Burghers had come to him again, declaring that the rebels were approaching the fort, and repeating their application to be allowed to retire on board the ships.

On Tuesday the 8th, the wife of J. H. SCHRIENDER arrived with her child and related that she had been a prisoner. The rebels had six hundred men on *Hollandia*, and their strength was altogether fully a thousand. A government had been established among them, and the chiefs kept order by strict discipline. They had murdered seven white persons at one

time, and showed her the mutilated bodies, after which, they gave her a paper to take to the Governor and sent her away. This paper was a sort of letter, stating that the cause of the war was the stoppage of their allowances by certain masters, especially BARKEY, DE GRAAF, ISAAC HERMANS and LENTZENG. The Governor must go away to Holland at once, and if he would agree to do so and fire four guns as a signal, the fort would be left unmolested, but if he refused and fired three guns, the rebel leader would come down at once and fight it out.

Secretary HARKENBOTH then announced that the nineteen Burghers were demanding an answer to their petition. The Governor said he could not receive such a message, if they wanted anything let them come in. Thirteen of them then entered and made their request, to which they received a reply that the Council could not decide so hastily, and were told that they must remain in the fort for the present.

Hereupon, the Military Officers were called in, and asked if they were in a position to defend the fortress against six hundred negroes, to which they answered most emphatically "No!" They had only fifteen healthy men, and these were weak and exhausted by continual duty.

The Burghers then sent in another petition, to be allowed to retire to the vessels, to which some had gone already.

The Officers were again called in, and asked as before, whether they could defend the fort, and they repeated a positive "No!"

Councillor ABBENSETTS was getting disheartened by this time, and now reviewed the sad state of things in a most desponding tone. What with the rotten defences of Fort Nassau, the weakness of the soldiers, the fear of the Burghers, and the uncertainty of the good faith of the slaves in the fort, nothing could be gained by a defence. They would be worse off by waiting here for months, than if they moved further down the river. The way to the

Canje was now open, but how long that might be the case he could not tell, or how soon the rebels might go there. He therefore proposed that the fort be abandoned that evening, and that they all proceed down the river as far as *Dageraad*.

To this the other Councillors assented, on which the Governor said, it was a hard and bitter thing for him to be obliged to give his consent to such a proposition, but as they were all agreed, he could do nothing but conform to their wishes with the greatest reluctance.

It was then resolved to abandon Fort Nassau that afternoon at 4 o'clock, and go on board the vessels. As the Military recommended that the fort should be destroyed, they were ordered to spike the guns and set it on fire before its final desertion.

It must have been with the deepest feelings of regret that such a man as Governor HOOGENHEIM deserted his post on that unhappy afternoon. He knew that it meant simply abandoning the whole colony to the negroes, while, if any thing like a good front had been shown, the revolt might have been suppressed. With the exception of ABBENSETT, the Governor appears to have been the only brave man in the community. Every one else seemed to have gone mad with fright. If the fort was out of order there was no reason why it should not have been repaired. They had a number of faithful slaves with them, apparently doing nothing, and yet they simply walked round pushing at a palissade here and there to show each other its weakness. It is no wonder that young GEDNEY CLARKE, in writing of the affair stigmatised it in the strongest terms. "The Governor, he says, (through fear, or some other motive) blew up the fort, destroyed all the ammunition, &c., and embarked on board a Dutch ship lying in the river, so that these murdering villains got possession of the whole river without the least trouble, chiefly occasioned, it is thought,

by being afraid of them, for I am sure that you and I, with twenty more, could have kept off four thousand of such rascals in that fort." *

The next meeting of the Council took place at *Dageraad*, on Friday the 11th. In the absence of the Secretary, who was on board Captain PYNAPPEL's vessel, and sent an excuse that he was sick, Councillor ABBENSETTS took the Minutes.

The Governor gave an account of the events of the previous days. On Tuesday the 8th, they heard that the rebels were still burning the houses on the plantations, and the mounted patrols reported the negroes to be assembling, some on horseback, in the savannah behind the fort, and near the houses at New Amsterdam. Everything was put in readiness against an expected attack, but nothing occurred. Between 5.30 and 6.30 p.m., the Burghers and Military left the fort, and the Governor and Council followed, leaving a Lieutenant and some soldiers to fire the place, as soon as the vessels left their moorings.

After the evacuation, a message was sent to the lower Canje to give the inhabitants notice of the change.

The ships left at half past seven, and an hour later the fort was set on fire. At midnight, they anchored at *De Velde*, and at nine in the morning again drifted down the river. The manager of *De Velde*, who was on board the *Berbice Welfare*, went ashore, and found the negroes plundering, who seeing their master, set upon and tried to kill him, but some of the people on board, when they saw his danger, fired at them with their muskets, so that the manager succeeded in escaping. Drifting down to Plantation *Hoofd*, they found the faithful slaves of that plantation preparing to go down to *Dageraad*, whom they encouraged to walk along the shore and accompany the vessels. A messen-

* Godney Clarke Correspondence, *Times*, Vol. II, New Series.

ger from the Canje met them here, and said that Mr. CHAMBON had left his estate to go down the river. Opposite *Vigilantie* they were fired at from the shore, which they answered from the vessels. Noises were then heard on the banks, some of the negroes calling out, "We are men, and will come to *Dageraad* to-morrow to speak to you!" Captain KOCK heard cries for help, and going ashore found the Widow VANDENBROEK, who reported that the rebels had bound her and plundered her plantation, but she had succeeded in escaping. The buildings of the widow's plantation were then burning. Here they heard that the people from the Canje had gone down to Fort St. Andries, and that everything was quiet at *Dageraad*, only a few negroes having run away to join the rebels.

They arrived at *Dageraad*, (then the lowest Colony estate on the Berbice river) on the evening of the 10th, and went ashore next morning, where they found all quiet, the present meeting being held in the dwelling house of the plantation, in which they intended to remain and await assistance. They wanted to send one of the vessels to Fort St. Andries, to reinforce it, while the others remained at *Dageraad* to help in defending that plantation. The vessels had been ordered to remain, but Captain PYNAPPEL wanted to go down to the sea, as his men were sick, while Captain RAMELO also wished to leave, as he could get no cargo and was answerable to the owners for any delay. Captain LAWRENSEN's mate said his Captain was still sick, and as there were only six healthy men on board, he could give no help. Captain KOCK was willing to give all the assistance in his power, but took the ill-timed opportunity of complaining that the Vendue Master had not fulfilled his contract for the slaves brought by KOCK's vessel. The four Captains were however strictly ordered to remain, which made them very dissatisfied.

On the same evening, the case of KOCK v. WYs was tried by the Council. The Vendue Master excused himself from

complying with the conditions, as, on account of the insurrection, he had not received all the Bills of Exchange, but he had given the Captain whatever had been paid him. These he had endorsed with the proviso that he would not be responsible if they were not paid. The Captain refused to accept them with such an endorsement, but insisted that the conditions should be carried out without exception or reservation. The Council decided that WYs should give KOCK proper Bills of Exchange, without exception, according to the conditions of sale.

On Saturday the 12th, the Governor reported that Captain PYNAPPEL had gone down the river against his orders, and that he had sent an Act of Protest after him. PYNAPPEL had taken away a quantity of provisions and stores belonging to the Colony, for which he was held responsible. In answer to the protest the Captain stated that he considered the Governor's orders illegal, and was quite willing to stand the consequences. The Governor had then sent to bring back the Secretary and some other persons who had gone in the vessel, ordering the Secretary to come back and give in his accounts, to which that gentleman replied, that he would render his accounts in Holland, and that he knew nothing of there being any longer a Governor and Council in Berbice.

News was now brought of a revolt on *Herstelling*, (the next plantation above *Dageraad*) and that the Manager of that estate had shipped his sugar on board PYNAPPEL's vessel, and had gone on board himself with his wife and child. In the evening Captain RAMELO reported that the *Canje* was all in an uproar, that his ship was not in a fit state to defend herself, much less to give assistance, and declared his intention of proceeding down the river, while the mate of the *Standvastigheid* reported as before, that the Captain and men were still sick. Most of the people on the ships were grumbling; they were unwilling to keep guard, and said

they would refuse to fight if called upon. They now forwarded a request for permission to leave the colony ; they had lost enough already, and did not want to lose their lives, or the little property that had been saved. On deliberation the Council again gave way, deciding to leave *Dageraad* and drift down to Fort St. Andries that evening.

The next meeting was held at Fort St. Andries on Wednesday the 23rd of March, when the Governor made a statement of what had happened since the 12th. On Saturday, the three vessels weighed anchors and commenced to drift down the river, one of them getting aground soon afterwards and the others having to wait until the 15th, when the tide floated her off. While detained here they received news that the rebels had already come to *Dageraad*, having arrived almost immediately after the vessels had left. ABBENSETTS paid a visit to *Mara*, where he found things quiet, but the negroes appeared to be in a restless state. On Monday the 14th, some faithful negroes came from *Mara* with the news that the rebels had gone there and obliged most of the negroes to join them, these having however succeeded in running away. News then arrived from the Canje, that some of the inhabitants had made a stand on an estate two hours from the mouth of the river, but could not remain there long from want of provisions.

On Tuesday the 15th they drifted again, and another vessel got aground, while one of the others, the Captain refusing to wait, went down the river. During the night a boat came from up the river, which was found to belong to the vessel of Captain RAMELO. The men in her were all drunk ; they had gone to *Herstelling* to forage for cattle, and had been fired on by the negroes, which made the Governor very angry.

They arrived at St. Andries on the night of the 16th, landed on the following day, and fitted up rooms for a

Council Chamber and Secretary's office. The Captain of the Fort reported that the Burghers and others on PYNAPPEL's vessel had been making use of mutinous language, saying there was neither Council nor Fort, and that they should do as they liked. PYNAPPEL also complained of their insubordination. He and Captain RAMELO being disinclined to remain, and preparing for departure, the Governor was obliged to consent to their leaving, which he did the more readily, as provisions were getting scarce and the people did nothing but eat and drink. He therefore told them to go or stay as they liked, for he wanted no one there unless he was prepared to assist in defending the place. Permission having been thus given, some of the discontented left in their own boats for Demerara, with as many of their slaves as had remained faithful to them.

On inspecting the fort or post, the governor found it in a most miserable condition for defence, and, to add to the difficulty, no fresh water could be obtained without sending to the Canje. News arrived from the Canje on the 18th that more slaves had revolted, and on the 19th the Predicant stated his intention of leaving. The vessels had not yet left, and Captain PYNAPPEL was asked for the provisions and goods shipped at Fort Nassau, to which he replied that nothing was to be found on his ship. Captain Kock's vessel was still aground, and the people very disorderly, fearing they would not be able to escape. It was resolved on the 21st to remain and defend St. Andries, until hunger compelled them to leave, the few who intended to stay binding themselves to fight to the last.

Having finished his account of the state of affairs, the Governor called on Secretary HARKENBOTH to bring the books and papers of his office, as he had deserted his post and was stopping on Captain PYNAPPEL's vessel. The Secretary answered, that they were packed in two chests on board the vessel, and up to now they could not be got

at. Captain PYNAPPEL was then called, and asked for the chests, who said, they had been searched for but could not be found. He was peremptorily ordered to find the chests at once, and furnished, at his request, with six men to help in overhauling the vessel. The Secretary was then asked for an account of the money in his possession, to which he gave unsatisfactory answers, saying that the papers were in the chests and he could not remember. The Council thought it very strange that HARKENBOTH should have neglected his duties in such a manner, packing up the papers himself so that he could not find them, and then excusing himself from giving in his accounts for want of those documents.

ABRAHAM WYS, the Vendue Master, who had also remained on one of the vessels, was then called in, and asked what had become of the Poor Funds. He answered that the question should be referred to the Church Consistory, at whose request he had taken charge of some money. Being asked what money he had with him belonging to Boedels, he replied that the papers were packed in a chest, and where that was he did not know. The Orphan Masters gave similar answers when called upon to produce their accounts, stating that the balance of cash was in the chest of ABRAHAM WYS. Other officials gave more or less unsatisfactory statements, but as the Governor was powerless, he could do nothing more than take their excuses, and postpone further action to a more suitable opportunity.

Captain KOCK, who was still aground, asked the Council not to allow WYS to leave without paying the money that had been adjudged to him, and WYS was called upon to pay the Bills of Exchange, to which he objected, but was overruled by the Council. WYS then asked what would be his position if he remained in the colony, on which he was told he could remain where he was, as he had already proved himself unwilling and useless.

On Thursday the 24th Captains RAMELO and PYNAPPEL demanded passports, so that they might leave, but the Governor told them they must first give back the provisions and stores belonging to the Colony. As very little could be got from them however, the Council at last resolved to let them go, leaving the Directors to decide the matter, as under the circumstances they were not in a position to enforce their demands.

On Friday the 25th, the Secretary brought a chest, which he declared contained all his papers. Captain RAMELO was then called to give an account of the raid of his men, who answered that none of them had even asked for his permission, but had gone ashore secretly, where having found a house broken open by the negroes, they took away a barrel of meat and some other things. The two Captains wanted to leave that evening, but being pressed to remain until Sunday they consented.

By these two vessels, which did not sail from Berbice on Sunday the 27th of March as intended, but on the 8th of April, copies of the minutes of the Council were sent to the Directors, from which documents has been gleaned this sad story of a month's troubles and disasters. The Governor's letter was a most pitiful one. He was anxiously waiting for help at Post St. Andries, in the midst of a barren savannah, with only one battery of two pieces of rotten cannon to defend it. The rebels numbered about three thousand now, had four hundred muskets, with plenty of ammunition, cutlasses and other sharp weapons, while the remnant of the white inhabitants had only a few muskets, and no ammunition for the cannons, even if these had been in good order. Provisions were very scarce, and in case the negroes should attack them they would be cut off from their supply of water.

From the state of utter despondency to which the Governor had been reduced, he was roused on the 28th of

March, by the appearance of a sail, which proved to be the English brigantine *Betsy*, Captain GEORGE BUCKMASTER, with a hundred soldiers from Surinam. There being no Dutch vessel in the neighbouring colony when HOOGENHEIM's urgent appeal for help was received, Governor CROMMELIN chartered the *Betsy*, and sent Captain RYSEL and TEXIER, with four Lieutenants, four Corporals, four drummers and eighty-three soldiers, at the same time sending a detachment to the Corentyne post to prevent the rebels making their escape to Surinam.

This opportune arrival put another aspect on the state of affairs, and the Governor became like a different person. Here were a hundred well disciplined soldiers at his command, and he at once felt the vast difference between these and the coward rabble with whom he had so lately been contending. At once, movements were made to recover possession of the colony, a Lieutenant and a small force being despatched to the Canje, the Governor and the remainder proceeding to *Dageraad*, where they were at once joined by several hundred faithful negroes, while the rebels immediately forsook the neighbourhood and carried the news to their chieftains.

On the 2nd of April, seven hundred rebels made an attack on *Dageraad*, which was defended from early morning to midday, when the negroes having suffered some losses in killed and wounded, were forced to retire. Being inspired with confidence by this victory, it was then decided to remain at *Dageraad* until further assistance should arrive.

The following day, a young man named JAN ABRAHAM CHARBON arrived at *Dageraad*, with a letter from the two rebel Captains, COFFY and AKKARA, which ran as follows :—

“Coffy, Governor of the Negroes of Berbice and Captain AKKARA send their greetings to your late Honourable. We don't want war ; we see clearly that you do want war.

"BARKEY and his servant, DE GRAFF, SCHOOCK, DELL, VAN LENTZING and FREDERICK BETHEN, but more especially Mr. BARKEY and his servant, and DE GRAFF, are the principal originators of the riot which has occurred in Berbice. The Governor (COFFY) was present when it commenced, and was very angry at it. The Governor of Berbice asks Your Honour that Your Honour will come and speak with him; don't be afraid! but if you won't come, we will fight as long as one Christian remains in Berbice. The Governor will give Your Honour half of Berbice, and all the negroes will go high up the river, but don't think they will remain slaves. Those negroes that your Honour has on the ships, they can remain slaves. The Governor greets your Honour."

CHARBON was son of the Manager of *Oosterbeck*, and had been a prisoner among the rebels for three weeks, during which time he saw some of the atrocities committed by them on their prisoners, who were many of them women and children. He had been kept alive by COFFY, because his services were required for writing letters, &c., and he had been compelled to follow the Chief, who tried very hard to induce him to join the rebels, by giving him presents of fine clothes and other articles of plunder. His story was as follows:—

"Mr. MITTELHOLZER* sent a negro to me in the night, with the news that all the slaves down the river were murdering the Christians, at the same time telling me to come to him with all the people, and bring our loaded guns. We went and kept guard with him until morning, when we proceeded to *Peereboom*, where was a gathering of thirty Christians. All our people went with us, and remained faithful until the rebels appeared from the bush and attacked us. We defended the house from nine in the morning until seven in the evening, when a negro from *Oosterlyk* called out and asked if we wanted to make peace, to which we answered, Yes! The rebels then came near and entered into an arrangement that they would not harm us, but escort us down to the fort in the morning. When we went to embark in our boats and a punt, they commenced firing on us and wounded me. We fled across the river, but being unable to land, were obliged to jump into the water. Some were drowned, but I managed to reach the shore, where I found MITTELHOLZER lying on the ground to hide himself until night, and I lay down with him.

"We remained eight days in the bush, until at last we came to *Doornboom*, exhausted, and almost dying with hunger and thirst. We tried to

* C. Mittelholzer was Manager of *De Vreede*, a little below *Peereboom*.

get to the bank of the river, but seeing negroes about, we fled back to the bush. We then went to *Oosterlyk* to look for corn, and finding a little, hurried back into the bush to eat it. While lying hidden we saw a negro, armed with a sabre, coming along; he passed very near but did not see us. Not long after, others came and spied where we were lying down. One of them, seeing MITTELHOLZER, pointed his gun at him, but my companion cried out, No! No! and then ran out upon the rebel, attacking him with his sabre, and cutting off one of his hands, then taking away the negro's gun, he put them all to flight. MITTELHOLZER was unlucky enough to be captured soon afterwards, and I heard him crying out most pitifully as I ran away. I walked about the bush for six or seven days, but hunger and thirst brought me again back to *Oosterlyk*, where I fell into the hands of the rebels, who treated me kindly at first. In the evening came a boat full of rebels who stripped me of everything, even down to my shirt and trousers, and threatened to give me two hundred lashes and cut off my head. I was taken to *Hollandia* and *Zeelandia*, where were other Christian prisoners, including the widow JOHANSEN, and was put in the stocks. The next day the rebels horsewhipped the Christians, and murdered two of them. I was kept in the stocks for six days and received fifty lashes, after which they told me that as I was young and could write, they would not hurt me any more.

"The rebels having heard that a ship had come up the river, their Captain ordered me to go to the Governor, and ask him if he wished to make peace, as, if so, the rebels would allow him half the colony. They then gave me a Joe, a watch, and a pair of silver shoe buckles, and told me to come back again, or they would kill me. I was then put in a corial with two Indians, who brought me to *Dageraad*, where I found the Governor and the military from Surinam."

Very little was done towards regaining possession of the colony during the month of April, but on the 3rd of May, the little body of whites was reinforced by the arrival of two vessels from St. Eustatius, the "*Seven Provinces*" and the "*St. Eustatius*," manned respectively with 88 and 66 soldiers, besides their crews. They proceeded to *Dageraad* at once, where they found the people much in want of the provisions and other necessaries which were on board. With this additional force, the Governor thought they could commence measures of offence and recover a little of the lost ground. A Council of War was held, and it was proposed to advance as far as *Vigilantie*, but on deliberation it was decided that the time had not yet arrived for such a

measure. If an advance was made up the river, the rebels would probably retreat from plantation to plantation, finishing their work of destruction as they went along, and at last retire to the bush and savannahs, where they would be a continual danger to the colony like the Bush Negroes of Surinam.

The Governor, knowing the character of the troops, who were mercenaries of all nationalities, requiring extraordinary inducements even to the performance of their ordinary duties, drew up a list of premiums, which was published on the 8th of May. For the capture of the chief COFFEY, £500 was offered, for AKKARA, £400, for each rebel taken alive, £50, and for every negro shot, £20, while half the value of everything taken from the rebels would be divided among them as prize money. A few days later, compensations were offered for those who might be mutilated or maimed, similar to the provisions of the Articled Letter of the West India Company. These offers afterwards gave rise to some disputes, as the Directors thought such premiums should only be offered when fighting with an enemy in a strange land, and not when they were recovering their own property.

On the 13th of May, the rebels brought their whole force against *Dageraal*, intending to strike a final blow, and, if the reinforcements had not arrived from St. Eustatius, it probably would have been all over with its few sickly defenders. Every precaution had been taken by this time to prevent a surprise, so that when at seven in the morning, there were signs of a gathering of the enemy, ENSIGN REIS was sent to reconnoitre, and after a little skirmishing returned with the news that the whole force of the rebels was at hand. At ten o'clock the enemy advanced in three bodies of about five hundred each, and attacked the house at different points. At first they gained a little advantage, but the firing from the ships soon made an impression on

them, making them retire a little and then renew the attack. Under a burning sun, the defenders fought behind their earth-works for five hours, driving the negroes back again and again, only to see them recover themselves and renew the fight. At last, when the courage of the rebels began to fail, Lieutenant THEILEN made a sortie with eighty picked men and put them entirely to flight. How many of the rebels were killed was never known, as it was their custom to carry off the dead and wounded, but eight were found on the field, whose heads were cut off and placed on poles along the banks of the river. Eight of the whites were killed and ten wounded, several of the latter dying soon afterwards. The Governor fought stoutly, as did also Captain VAN RYSEL and Lieutenant THEILEN, all of whom had narrow escapes. After this repulse the negroes began to lose confidence, and made no more demonstrations on the offensive.

The battle having happily ended in the discomfiture of the enemy, new courage was infused into the Governor but this did not last long as it was followed by a calamity which threw him back into the old state of despondency. The epidemic sickness fell upon the soldiers, causing a great many deaths, and greatly reducing the strength of the defenders. On the 29th of May, HOOGENHEIM wrote to the Directors, saying that a hundred men were sick, most of them from the St. Eustatius' vessels, so that these ships were helpless, while the *Standvastigheid* had lost her Captain, mate, and all hands. The sick were lying in hospital, without medicines or proper food, there being hardly provisions enough for the healthy, while medical comforts were entirely wanting. "For God's sake, said he, send and help us in our hour of need, and preserve us from the attacks of our cruel enemies." On the 26th of August, HOOGENHEIM records in his journal that 54 soldiers from the ship *Seven Provinces* had died

already, while the two Councillors, GILLISON and SCHIRMMEISTER, Book-keeper SCHOOK, two Captains, and nearly all the sailors of two of the vessels of the Association, had fallen victims to the malignant fever.

On the 19th of June, a trading vessel arrived, bringing a new Secretary to replace HARKENBOTH, who had received his notice of dismissal before the insurrection had broken out. The new officer, who was named LAURENS VAN FICK, fell sick at once, and could do nothing for several months, remaining helpless at Fort St. Andries.

The Governor was now almost alone, without even a Secretary, the only Councillor left being ABBENSETTS, he had therefore to do everything himself, and the best he could under the circumstances for a lot of invalids. The rebels were a little exhausted by this time, and sent several messengers offering to make terms on similar lines to those proposals already noticed, which the Governor pretended to entertain for the purpose of gaining time. He was determined to remain at *Dageraad* until assistance should arrive from the fatherland, and would not listen to the croakers, who told him that he had better go back to St. Andries as a lot of sick and dying men were useless against the rebels. When matters appeared most depressing, a little help was received from St. Eustatius by the arrival of the bark *Demerara's Welfare* with a supply of provisions and forty men. This small accession of strength was particularly welcome, as on the 7th of July, when the vessel arrived, there were not enough healthy soldiers to relieve guard.

Meanwhile, the Directeur-General of the Two Rivers had succeeded in inducing the Caribs to go from Demerara to the upper Berbice, with very good results, as they kept the negroes from wandering, and killed some of the stragglers. With these, and the guard in the Demerara, escape in that direction was effectually prevented, while on the Surinam

side, the post on the west bank of the Corentyne received a reinforcement of seventy soldiers in June. With the assistance of forty Indians, the garrison of the Corentyne post made some expeditions towards the Canje, where they succeeded in putting the rebels to flight, and took some of their booty. While dividing this they quarrelled about the respective shares of the soldiers and Indians, the Officers wanting to give everything to the latter, and finally forty-two soldiers, led by the Surgeon, a Sergeant, and a Frenchman named JEAN RENAUD, mutinied, disarmed and ill-treated the other officers, and finally fled through the Indian path to join the Berbice rebels, from thence intending to escape to the Orinoco. Arriving at *Magdalenburg* on the Canje, they met with a large contingent of the rebels, but instead of being favourably received as they expected, the negroes looked on them with mistrust, and would not believe their protestations that they wished to be friends. The deserters were therefore taken prisoners, and twenty-eight of them killed at once, while the remainder were kept at different places as white slaves, the Surgeon being employed by COFFEY to attend the sick and wounded, while some of the others were ordered to drill the rebels and clean and repair their weapons.

HOOGENHEIM heard this story from some of the faithful negroes, who now and then managed to escape from the rebels, and worried himself a great deal about the influence these men might have in the rebel camp. He surreptitiously sent them messages, asking them to try to escape and he would overlook their misdeeds, but the deserters knew too well what punishment they had incurred to run away as long as their lives were safe, while they expected to become leaders of the negroes as soon as their distrust had abated. To watch the deserters, the Governor sent Captain SALVOLANI with the *Demerara's Welfare* to cruise up the Canje, and try if possible to stop the rebels from

going to the Corentyne, and thence to Surinam. SALVOLANI acted with so much energy, that he managed to command the path to the Corentyne, and thus prevented what might have been a serious danger to Surinam.

Captain HATTINGA, who had been left in charge of Fort St. Andries, gave a great deal of trouble to the Governor. He had already been charged with drunkenness, and being now without control, did nothing but drink, until he became mad with *delirium tremens*, under the influence of which he left his post, and with fifteen men went up the Canje, where the party fired indiscriminately at all boats and negroes. Captain VAN RYSSEL had to be sent to St Andries to take charge, while Lieutenant PRONK was sent up the Canje to bring back HATTINGA, in which he at last succeeded by the aid of SALVOLANI. On being brought before a Court Martial, the recreant Captain was condemned to deprivation of all offices, to be cashiered with infamy, banished from the colony, and sent back to the Netherlands. Other cases of insubordination occurred, some of the officers of the Surinam contingent being sent back to that colony, as unfit for their posts.

While all these disasters had been taking place in Berbice, the Directors of course knew nothing of the affair, but sent the two trading vessels, which had arrived so opportunely, in the ordinary course. About the end of May, the first tidings were brought to the Netherlands by the ship *Gezusters*, from Essequibo, which had come by way of St. Eustatius, from which island she had sailed on the 28th of March, after giving the sad news to Governor DE WINDT, who had just heard rumours of the insurrection from GEDNEY CLARKE of Barbados. The Captain took with him a declaration signed by several of the refugees who had managed to escape to Demerara at the commencement of the insurrection, and this he sent to some persons in

Amsterdam, who had estates in Berbice. Further accounts were brought by a vessel from Surinam about the same time. The merchants in Amsterdam at once brought the matter to the notice of the Directors, asking them to send assistance, but at first they could hardly believe the news, because no official information had been received. However, on the 30th of May, they decided to send two vessels and fifty soldiers to Berbice, and also to ask the States General for further help.

Early in June, a petition to the States General was drawn up, and signed by the Burgomaster of Amsterdam and a large number of influential merchants, earnestly imploring assistance for Berbice to the extent of six hundred men at least and two frigates of war. This was favourably received by their High Mightinesses, as by this time a thrill of horror had gone through the Netherlands on hearing the cruel deeds of the rebels, while everywhere the greatest sympathy was felt for the destitute and ruinous condition of the people and colony. The matter was considered on the 8th of June, and it was decided on the 17th and 20th, that in the first place they would send at once the frigate *St. Martensdyk*, Captain HARINGMAN, which was then ready equipped for the Mediterranean, with 24 guns and 150 men, and that the snow the *Zephyr*, Captain VAN OYEN, with 12 guns and 110 men, should follow as soon as possible.

The *St. Martensdyk* sailed on the 23rd of July, and the *Zephyr* on the 15th of August, the Captains being ordered to call at Surinam first, to get information, and then proceed to Berbice, where they were to put themselves and men under the orders of the Governor.

Captain HARINGMAN arrived in Berbice on the 4th of November, and, after consulting the Governor, made ready an expedition of 180 men, and proceeded up the Canje on the 10th, to clear that river of rebels. He found a thousand negroes on *Magdalenburg*, *Stevensburg*, and *Horsten-*

burg, and on the 13th landed a hundred men on Plantation *Don Carlos*, with orders to march along the backs of these estates, while he would go up the river and attack *Magdalenburg* from the front, when he expected the rebels would fly and be caught by the contingent behind. This was done, but the negroes being on the look out, made their escape before the arrangements were in working order, first setting fire to the buildings of the estates. Leaving a bark up the Canje, the party then returned to *Dageraad*.

By this time, the negroes had begun to quarrel among themselves. Their chieftains assumed greater authority than their late white masters, and this caused much dissatisfaction. Some of them escaped to *Dageraad*, and told the Governor that the slaves of the Colony plantations were looking to come back, and ready to fall out with the rebels. *Coffy* had fought with another leader named *ATTA*, and being conquered, had shot himself, while *AKKARA* was now a slave to the others, and working in the field. Four other leaders had been chosen, *ACCABRE*, *QUAOCO*, *BAUBE* and *GOUSSARI*, who did not agree among themselves, so that *HOOGENHEIM* was encouraged to hope that their strength was broken. Up to the arrival of Captain *HARINGMAN*, the whites only held actual possession of *St. Andries* and *Dageraad*, while the rebels still retained all the plantations on both sides of the river *Berbice*, and made foraging excursions to the *Canje*. The Indians from *Demerara* were now skirmishing with the rebels near *Savonette*, and succeeded in killing a few of them, but this made very little impression on such a host.

On the 27th of November, the force was augmented by the arrival of two vessels from the Directors, with fifty soldiers, and the frigate *Dolphin*, while on the 5th of December, came the snow *Zephyr*, the last two being war vessels, with 250 soldiers and sailors. It was now felt that

the time had come to put a finishing stroke to the rebellion, a plan was therefore drawn up for a simultaneous attack from the Demerara and the Canje, while the main force was to proceed up the Berbice river.

The Canje contingent consisted of 56 men, while that for Demerara was composed of 30 soldiers and as many sailors, under the command of Lieutenant CROMBIE, who was directed to join Captain SMITH and the Barbadian volunteers in Demerara, and proceed through the Indian path to *Savonette*.

For the Berbice expedition all the vessels, except the *St. Martensdyk* which drew too much water, and two merchant vessels, were utilised. They consisted of the *Dolphin* with 150 soldiers and marines, the *Zephyr* with 110, the long-boat of the *Dolphin* with 20, the *Seven Provinces* and *St. Eustatius* with 62, and the colony boat, the *Hope* with 38.

When on December the 9th, they had given Lieut. CROMBIE time enough to get up the Demerara, the expedition started in good order and proceeded up the river, making the negroes run away into the bush, as they saw such an imposing force slowly advancing. The rebels so generally retreated, that there was no fighting to be done, although detachments were continually sent ashore, their only work being to beat out an occasional fire, and look for an enemy which they could not find. Opposite Fort Nassau, the *Dolphin* was left at anchor, as she drew too much water to go farther, while the other vessels proceeded on their way. On the Colony plantations a good number of negroes were found who were both ready and willing to surrender, excusing themselves on the plea that they had been forced to join the rebels against their own wishes. Fifty to sixty of them surrendered every day, so that there was some difficulty as to their disposal. When the vessels arrived at *Markey*, news was brought that two of the prin-

cipal parties of the rebels had retired to the bush, one behind the plantation, and the other under ATTA, to the back of *Hardenbroek*.

On the 25th of December, the expedition arrived at Wikkie creek, and on the following day an attack was made on a party of rebels. It was so arranged that by landing a party of soldiers to catch the negroes in the rear, while several boats proceeded up the creek, the enemy might be caught between the two fires. Lieut THIELEN, who commanded the boat expedition, instead of reconnoitring, pushed up the creek in a tent boat, in his eagerness going at some distance in front of his men. Being thus alone, the boat was suddenly exposed to a murderous fire from the rebels, who under the command of two of the Surinam deserters, were hidden in the bush alongside the creek. This firing, which killed or wounded most of the occupants of the first boat, including Lieutenant THIELEN, checked the onset of the others, but a few minutes later the party on shore arrived, and drove away the enemy. A guard was then left at *Hardenbroek* and the vessels proceeded up the river.

They arrived before *Savonette* on December the 28th, where they found Lieutenant CROMBIE and Captain SMITH. The party from Demerara had arrived a week before, after a fatiguing march through the bush and swamp, and, on arriving, had a fight with the rebels, in which fifty or sixty of them were killed, and the deserter, JEAN RENAUD, taken prisoner. After making arrangements to keep a guard on *Savonette*, Captain SMITH was allowed to leave and go down the river for Demerara, after which the expedition commenced its return to Fort Nassau.

Meanwhile, the Directors were very busy, and had impressed upon the States General the necessity that a crushing blow should be inflicted on the rebels. Field Marshal the Duke of Brunswick was therefore consulted, as to the

best means of rendering effectual assistance to Berbice. He recommended that volunteers should be invited from every regiment, to the number of 50 officers, 78 non-commissioned officers, 12 drummers, and 468 men, besides 60 gunners and a few other people such as carpenters &c. The cost was estimated at £706,000, but as the expedition was going to a desolated country, where nothing could be procured, it would be necessary to allow a large margin for contingencies. While advocating economy, the Duke thought that their High Mightinesses should spare no expense, but provide everything necessary for the health and comfort of the troops, such as good food and drink, clothing, bedding and medicines, as otherwise they might suffer from exposure in such a hot climate, and the whole object of the expedition be perhaps frustrated. The States General on the 11th of July, gave the Duke leave to carry out his proposition as soon as possible, and on the 6th of November a fleet of four large ships and two smaller vessels, sailed from the Texel, with 660 officers and men. They were under the command of Colonel DE SALVE, who was ordered to proceed to Surinam, where he might ascertain the best means of assisting Berbice. After a favourable voyage, the fleet arrived in Surinam on the 19th of December and sailed for Berbice on the 26th.

On New Year's Day 1764, when the expedition of the Governor and Captain HARINGMAN was drifting down the river, and had arrived opposite *Hardenbroek*, a letter was brought from Colonel DE SALVE, informing HOOGENHEIM that he had come to his assistance, with six vessels and six hundred States' troops.

There was not much to be done now, as the rebels were thoroughly cowed, and the reinforcements were only of use to help in capturing them, and in re-establishing the Government on a sound footing. On the 2nd of January, Miss GEORGE, who had been captured by the rebels after

the disaster at *Peereboom*, managed to make her escape from them. She had been forced by *Coffy* to become his mistress, and since his death, had kept herself apart from the rebels by the aid of two or three faithful negroes. From this time the Governor was engaged in receiving the submission of one party of rebels after another, who were put under guard until the Council could meet.

On the 6th of January the expedition returned back as far as the ruins of Fort Nassau, where the vessels anchored, and *HOOGENHEIM* went down to Pln. *Hooft* to meet Colonel *DE SALVE*, whose vessel had come up the river. The meeting was very impressive, the Governor naturally feeling that now the great burden of responsibility was shared by the Colonel, and that he had no further cause for anxiety. After discussing the state of affairs, it was agreed that the Government should be administered from *Dageraad* for the present, while Colonel *DE SALVE* should make his headquarters at New Amsterdam, at the Predicant's House, which with the Church, appear to have been the only buildings standing in that neighbourhood. Here, logies were built for the soldiers, earth-works thrown up and palissades erected, to defend it in case the rebels should make an attack. A contingent was posted at the Canje, and guards placed in several localities, up and down the river, while boat patrols kept open the communication between them.

Having heard that the chief *ATTA* was behind *Goedland* and *Goed Fortuin*, with a large gang of rebels, it was decided on the 18th of January, to send thirty-three soldiers under a Captain, to dislodge them. Both soldiers and officer being unacquainted with bush fighting, were so fiercely assailed by the enemy, from behind the trees, that they ignominiously retreated, leaving the Captain and several others dead. Several other parties were sent out with indifferent success, the rebels generally having the advantage,

from their superior knowledge of the forest and savannah. An expedition went up the Wikkie and dispersed fifteen hundred of the rebels, who left their chief ATTA to himself; this broke up the main body of the negroes. Shortly afterwards AKKARA and GOUSSARI surrendered themselves, and offered their services if pardoned, which the Governor agreed to accept on the understanding that they should do their best to bring in all the others. By their aid and influence the number of those who surrendered increased daily, and became so great that there was considerable difficulty in guarding, lodging, and feeding them. Most of the Colony slaves were now sent to the plantations, and put to work on the provision grounds, so that something might be done to feed such a host of people as soon as possible.

In February, the Surinam corps was allowed to leave, and also the vessel of SALVOLANI, while the *Zephyr* was sent to Demerara, to let the negroes see what would be brought against them if they should dare to follow the example of their brethren in Berbice. Fever and dysentery were still playing sad havoc with the soldiers, and it being desirable that they should leave as soon as possible, the trials were hurried over with almost indecent haste. As the only remaining Councillors were the Governor and ABBENSETTS, two others were assumed, to form a Council of Criminal Justice, which sat on the 25th of February. The Governor was sorry that there was no such officer as a Fiscal or Public Prosecutor, so that justice might be impartially administered according to law, but as no lawyer could be had he was obliged to be satisfied with the Secretary. There were eight hundred prisoners at New Amsterdam, and one hundred of these were selected for trial as ringleaders, and sent down to *Dageraad* in irons. On the 2nd of March two Commissioners from the Council commenced the examinations, and finished them on the 14th, after which the full Council met

on the 16th, to consider the examinations and sentence the prisoners. Fifty-three were sentenced to death and forty-seven pardoned. The execution took up almost the whole of the following day, when fifteen were burnt to death, sixteen broken on the wheel, and twenty two hanged. The Governor was rather shocked at these horrible executions, and tried to infuse a little more humanity into the Council, but the other members were eager for revenge, and only inclined to be lenient when the criminals happened to be their own slaves. ✓

Meanwhile, the rebels who had not surrendered formed themselves into two bands, under the rival chiefs ATTA and ACCABEE, the former remaining near the Wikkie, while his enemy entrenched himself behind Markey, protected by a *cheval de frise* of sharp bamboos, which encircled the whole camp. Very heavy rains now commenced to fall, and added very much to the discomfort of both parties, while the swampy savannahs became uninhabitable for the rebels. To dislodge ACCABEE, Colonel DE SALVE decided in March, to fit out a proper bush expedition, provided with eight days provisions, 36 rounds of ammunition, and hammocks, negro porters being also furnished, to carry the baggage. On the 23rd, the party arrived near the rebel camp, and, advancing from four different points, surrounded it. After two or three hours fighting they succeeded in taking the place, killing thirty of the rebels, and capturing their chief, his lieutenant and eighty-one others, without the loss of a man on the part of the whites, and with only a few wounded. ACCABEE was an Obeah man, a fine robust fellow, who had great influence over the negroes, so that his capture was a serious loss to the rebels. The insurrection might now be considered as virtually at an end. What with those who had surrendered, and others captured by the soldiers and Indians, the number of slaves who had returned by the 29th of March, amounted to 2,600. ATTA

was captured and brought to the fort in irons on the 15th of April. He had been hiding up the Wikkie Creek, where AKKARA and GOUSSARI managed to capture him by a stratagem. When brought before the Governor, he was so humbled, that he wanted to kiss his feet, at which ACCABEE, who was present, laughed him to scorn.

The Indians did a great deal to render the rebels insecure, by tracing out their hiding places, and killing and taking them prisoners. The Corentyne post-holder paid £1,074 for living captives, and £1,080 for 180 right hands of those killed. It is stated that the Caribs ate the bodies of the negroes killed, but it is doubtful whether such was really the case, as it was generally supposed that they had entirely given up their cannibal practices.

On the 27th of April, there having been 309 prisoners taken with weapons since the last execution, the Council of Justice again met, and sentenced 34 to be executed, including the captured chiefs. On the following day seventeen were hanged, eight broken on the wheel, and nine burnt, seven of the last by a slow fire. The chiefs bore the greatest punishment without flinching, ATTA saying, "The Governor is right, I suffer what I deserve." The Governor had written to the Directors about these horrible executions, asking that they would use their authority to prevent them, but before an answer could arrive, a third execution took place, when 32 negroes, among them being a chief named FORTUIN, were horribly butchered. This was almost the last, as the Directors wrote, saying, that, as so many valuable slaves had been executed, less rigour was now necessary, and the Governor must proclaim a general amnesty. Being now supported in his humane intentions, HOOGENHEIM was able to overrule the vindictive measures proposed by ABBENSETTS and the other Councillors.

The troops had now become so weak by death and disease that Colonel DE SALVE wished to leave the Colony, and

in July, he received authority from their High Mightinesses to return, if he thought this could be done without risk to Berbice. The Colonel was sick himself when the Order arrived, and on consulting the Governor, a circular was sent out to the planters, (who had mostly returned to their estates) asking them to sign a certificate that the rebellion was now suppressed, which being done, DE SALVE prepared to leave in August. A garrison of a hundred volunteers remained behind, under the command of Major FOURGEAUD, with orders to stay in Berbice until they should be relieved. Fort Nassau had by this time been put in some sort of order, so that these soldiers were able to live there and defend the stores, while the troops of the Association kept guard at the posts. All the munitions of war, as well as most of the provisions and stores, were left behind, an inventory being taken so that they might be charged to the Directors, but this was never done. When preparing to depart, it was found that so many sailors had died, or were sick, that the vessels could not be manned, and it was necessary to send to St Eustatius for seamen before they could leave. At last, the vessels sailed for St Eustatius on the 24th of November, but owing to unfavourable weather, were obliged to put in at Curaçao. Here they remained for a month, to give the invalids a chance of recovery, and at last, Colonel DE SALVE being much better, they sailed for the Netherlands.

The insurrection was now suppressed, and the slaves thoroughly cowed, but Berbice was almost ruined. Of 286 whites only 116 now remained, some having fled, others died, and a few been murdered by the negroes. In reviewing the course of events, it is surprising to see that so few whites were killed, but this was probably due to the fact, that absolutely no defence was made, the cowardly fellows ran away on the first rumours of the revolt. Several cases of extreme atrocity show what might have been the

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fate of the colonists, had some of those mentioned by Coffy been captured. Perhaps the most horrible was that of one of the Colony surgeons, who is said to have been skinned alive by the rebels in revenge, the negroes believing he had tried to poison them with his medicines. One poor lady committed suicide, rather than submit to the embraces of one of the rebel chiefs, she fearing the same fate that befell poor Miss GEORGE.

It was a very difficult task for the Governor to put things in order, and the work naturally took up a great deal of time. Many of the sugar mills had been burnt, the provision grounds and cane fields were choked with weeds, imported provisions were very scarce, and altogether, the prospect before the planter was most disheartening. Only six of the Colony plantations were found worth renovating, while many of the private plantations were never restored to their former state. The Colony slaves were reduced from 1,451 to 1,072, while those belonging to private planters, had decreased from 2,800 to 1,392. It will be noticed that the loss of Colony slaves was less in proportion than that of the private planters ; this was due to the fact that the leaders in the insurrection belonged to private estates, while the negroes of the Colony plantations showed an inclination to remain faithful, and only joined the rebels under compulsion.

As would naturally be expected, the slaves were now kept under the strictest discipline. Some of the masters even went so far as to revenge themselves on the negroes, and a few of them were brought before the Council, but the punishments inflicted were very trifling, notwithstanding the efforts of the Governor to administer justice in an impartial manner. The Directors were so perplexed by their financial difficulties, that for some time, nothing was done to re-establish order and sound government, although HOOGENHEIM tried his best to put things straight. Sixteen

of the slaves who had helped in various ways to capture the rebels, were given their freedom by the Directors, but the virulence of the planters still continued. On the 15th of December 1764, nine of the rebels were executed, in accordance with the sentences of the Council of Justice, but after this execution the Governor proclaimed a general pardon, which was read to the assembled crowd of negroes, who had been brought to see the punishment, on which they cried out, " Dankje ! Dankje !" (Thanks ! Thanks !)

The ideas of the Governor in regard to the re-establishment of the colony, were very liberal, but he was far in advance of the Directors. The planters were almost ruined, and wanted more slaves to put their plantations in working order, as well as capital to carry on the necessary repairs and replace the buildings that had been destroyed. The Governor thought they should be allowed six years freedom from taxes, and that four hundred soldiers should be always kept in the colony. A proper fort should be built on the point between the Canje and the Berbice, at a cost of £200,000, redoubts for the different posts for £50,000, and, to maintain these defences, £50,000 would be required annually. After the end of the six years, the planters ought to be able to contribute towards the expenses of the establishment, but, to enable them to do this, the old settlers should be assisted, and new ones encouraged to settle near the new fort, where he thought a town might be laid out. The amount required, besides this, would be about £3,000,000, with which sum 10,000 slaves might be imported from Guinea at £300 per head. Another million would be required to provide materials, tools, and other necessities, for re-establishing the plantations. To raise such a capital, at a time when the colony was so unhealthy for Europeans, would, the Governor knew, be difficult, but he hoped that the sickness would soon be over, and perhaps their High Mightinesses might guarantee interest on

a loan. The planters should be bound to keep one white man to every fifteen slaves, which would prevent trouble in the future. If all these things were done, the colony would recover, and the planters be soon able to pay off its liabilities, but if mean and petty measures were taken, it would never recover.

Now that all the excitement of the conflict was over, the Governor became sick, and applied to the Directors for his dismissal, saying that his memory was impaired, and that, although only thirty-five years of age, he already felt like an old man. As he had no means of living in the fatherland without working, he took the liberty of putting himself under the consideration of their Honourables. He had been sixteen years in the Military service, and would be glad if they could help him in procuring a commission in the Army of the State.

The Directors were so embarrassed in 1764, that they could hardly decide whether the colony was worth keeping or not. They were absolutely penniless, and hampered by the liabilities incurred in sending assistance to Berbice, while at the same time, no produce had been received to meet these liabilities. There was no thought of paying for the States vessels and troops as yet, but the expenses of their own vessels and soldiers, and those from Surinam and St Eustatius, must be provided for. On the 16th of May 1764, they decided to make a call on the shareholders for eight per cent, i.e. £160 per share, which was paid, but did no more than settle a few of the most pressing demands. Then the free planters sent a petition against their being bound to pay for the different expeditions, as, if such a burden were put upon them, they would be obliged to leave the colony. Provision had to be made for 150 to 200 soldiers, and the Directors asked the States to allow their troops to stay, but as the climate was so unhealthy only a hundred were left until the Directors should be able

to relieve them. The States General was so liberal as to give them *f*12,000, to provide for the soldiers, and promised an annual contribution for twelve years towards their support, at the same time presenting them with all the ammunition and stores left by Colonel DE SALVE. These contributions helped, but were by no means sufficient. New officials were wanted, and money was absolutely necessary to pay for their passage and out-fits. At last, they petitioned the States of Holland and West Vriesland, who decided to advance *f*500,000, in sums of *f*50,000 at two and a half per cent interest, on condition that no dividend should be declared until the debt was paid off, and that they should give a proper account of their affairs whenever called upon.

Although the Directors were desirous of keeping HOOGENHEIM in Berbice, they were obliged to comply with his wish to retire, and appointed another Governor on the 10th of September, 1764. He was named JOHAN HEYLIGER, and is distinguished as JOHAN'S ZOON or JOHANNES FILIUS, meaning the same as the English junior. He was a native of St. Eustatius, had lived in Essequibo, and was the grantee of a piece of land which included what are now the plantations of *Werk-en-Bust*, *La Penitence* and *Ruimveld* in Demerara. Going out by way of St. Eustatius, he did not arrive in Berbice until the 28th of May, 1765. HOOGENHEIM left a few days afterwards, and on his arrival in the Netherlands, was received honourably by the Directors and their High Mightinesses, who, after his health had been re-established, appointed him a Major of the States troops.

New Officials were now appointed, to fill up the vacancies caused by death, and the discharge of some who had proved incompetent, or left the colony during the revolt. There was plenty of work for all, but they laboured under very great difficulties, from want of capital. An extraordinary head-tax of one guilder was imposed, against

which the planters protested as being contrary to the Charter, while a tax of five per cent was deducted from the salaries of the officials. The epidemic seems to have spent itself about the time of HEYLIGER's arrival, and this was an advantage to the colony, but little could be done by the Governor, as the Directors thought the planters ought to contribute more towards the expenses, while they on the contrary expected everything to be done by the Association. Between the two, HEYLIGER found himself very uncomfortable, as he could please neither, and in 1767, on a plea of lameness and ill health, he asked for leave of absence, or if that could not be given, for his discharge. In accordance with this demand, the Directors accepted his resignation on the 23rd of November, 1767.

CHAPTER X.

THE LAST YEARS OF GRAVESANDE'S ADMINISTRATION, 1763—1772.

Alarm caused by the Berbice insurrection—Measures taken to prevent its reaching the two rivers—Gedney Clarke sends assistance from Barbados—Indians sent overland to Berbice—Slight disturbance at Dalgin—Plot of negroes in Essequibo—Commandeur Bercheyck dies and is succeeded by Van den Heuvel—Publication prohibiting export of produce elsewhere than to Zeeland, &c.—Buildings on Borsselen Island—A Predicant arrives in Demerara—Exports—Difficulties between Gravesande and the Directors—Boddaert's bank in Amsterdam—A vessel allowed to ship produce in Demerara—First Council of Justice in Demerara—Burgher districts—First Colonial Councillors of Policy—Contemporary account of Demerara—Slave trade—Earthquake—Expedition to the interior—Runaways—Development of Demerara—Dispute between the Zeeland Chamber and the Ten settled—Gravesande and Van den Heuvel get disheartened and resign—Increase in the exports—Gravesande and his Council.

THE Berbice insurrection was reported in Essequibo and Demerara about the middle of March. On the 16th, an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Justice was held, when the Directeur-General stated that he had received most painful tidings from Berbice—of plantations destroyed and Christians horribly murdered—and, as it was possible that some of the rebels might come over to these rivers, he proposed that certain provisions should be made, which he hoped, with God's assistance, would prevent this. The following orders were directed to be published both in Essequibo and Demerara:—

1. If a Manager shall find any of the rebels on his plantation, he shall be bound to give an alarm, by firing two shots shortly after each other,

and the same five minutes afterwards ; to be repeated from plantation to plantation, until Fort Zeelandia shall take it up ; those having no cannons to fire with muskets.

2. For the present, every one is forbidden to fire any other shots, even with an ordinary musket, on pain of severe correction.

3. In regard to the Burghers, every one is bound to carry out the orders of their respective Captains, and at the first alarm to assemble at the houses of their Officers, properly armed, and then proceed to Fort Zeelandia.

4. And, as no expedition can proceed without slaves, every one shall contribute according to the list made in 1762, so that 200 negroes may be provided, together with provisions for fourteen days.

GEDNEY CLARKE, Collector of Customs and a member of the Council of Barbados, together with his son GEDNEY CLARKE, junior, owned at that time four plantations in Demerara. Hearing on the 25th of March from a Mr. WILTSHIRE, who had just come from Demerara, that CORNELIS ANDERSON had fled from Berbice to Demerara with 126 slaves on the 17th, that the negroes in the former colony were in revolt, and that they had threatened to come over to Demerara, he began to fear for his properties. Immediately therefore, on hearing the news, he sent a sloop with ammunition and other necessaries, and three days after, on the 28th, managed to despatch three more vessels, with fifty Barbadian volunteers under the command of Capt. SMITH. He at the same time sent information of the affair to Governor DE WINDT at St. EUSTATIUS, and was instrumental in procuring assistance for Berbice from that island. On their arrival the Barbados volunteers took up their quarters at the *Loo*, to which estate they feared the rebels would come from Berbice, through the Indian path, and there they threw up an earth-work round the buildings, and otherwise strengthened it against assault.

At the meeting of the Council of Justice on the 12th of April, the Directeur-General reported that they had been obliged to send to Barbados for assistance, and vessels and men had already arrived. It was reasonable that the colo-

nists should pay the expense, but as he understood the Barbadians were only sent to protect the English plantations they need not offer payment, but if it was demanded then every plantation would be bound to contribute.

It was resolved that every manager finding a rebel should give information, on pain of a fine of £1,000; that every slave should have his free Saturdays and proper rations, on pain of the same fine; and also that no one should give kiltum or spirits to any of the soldiers, or particularly the slaves, on pain of a fine of £600.

Governor HOOGENHEIM had written a letter to the Directeur-General, asking for help, but very little could be given him; it was agreed however that a vessel should be sent to carry the news to Surinam, and that the free Indians should be asked to try and keep the rebels from escaping up the river Berbice.

GRAVESANDE wrote to the Directors, informing them that Demerara was in a state of consternation; Berbice was not far away, and the path overland quite open, so that great fears were entertained. There had been a slight disturbance on Mr. BIRMINGHAM's plantation (*Dalgin*) which caused some of the planters to come down the river. Three vessels had arrived from Barbados, one of them an English man-of-war; the Directeur-General did not know who had sent the last, but the two privateers had been sent by GEDNEY CLARKE. A guard had been placed at the Mablissa Creek, which left early in May, as the Marines had been ordered to return.

In reporting to the States General, the Directors said that everything was peaceful in Essequibo. There had been reports of a riot, but these were untrue. GRAVESANDE and BERCHEYCK had done everything possible to keep away the rebels. If GRAVESANDE had sent to the Governor of Barbados for assistance in the name of their High Mightinesses they had no doubt it would have been rendered; he

still intended to do so if circumstances required it, to the extent of 200 men, but at present there was no probability of this being necessary. It would be desirable to attack the rebels from Demerara and cut off their retreat, as if they should come over and fortify themselves, they would become a future danger to that river.

HOOGENHEIM wrote to the Directeur-General on the 18th of April, saying that the Caribs would be a great help if they could be induced by GRAVESANDE to give their assistance, and go over to Savonette with a few whites, to regain that plantation and the Accaway post. Patrols were reconnoitring the neighbourhood daily, and he hoped soon to give the rebels a lesson. GRAVESANDE might keep the faithful Colony slaves, who had been sent to Demerara, for the present, as he could do nothing with them in Berbice.

The slight disturbance on Dalgin was naturally exaggerated, but the owner himself thought nothing of it, and did not care to have any of his slaves taken before the Council of Justice. Orders were sent to him to forward them to Fort Island, but he refused. The matter was considered on the 9th of May, when the Commandeur of Demerara complained that Mr. EDWARD BIRMINGHAM had been so insolent that he had been obliged to arrest him. He had said that he laughed at the Commandeur's orders, and refused to have his people arrested. It was decided that he should be excused this time if he apologised to the Commandeur.

At the same meeting it was reported that a plot existed on the Company's plantations, *Duynenburg* and *Agtekerke*, as well as on some of the private estates, to revolt and send their Managers back to the fatherland, but not to injure them. At the following meeting in July, it was stated that the report was untrue, and the story tellers were ordered to be whipped. On the 1st of August, SWART, a driver and

a white man, was charged with trying, while the master was absent, to induce the negroes of Mr. STEUYS' plantation to steal a boat, and go to Berbice to join the rebels. He was sentenced to be whipped and branded, both ears to be cut off, and finally banished from the colony.

Up to the end of the year, the inhabitants of Demerara were very much concerned on account of the Berbice rebels being still at large, but after the expedition of December, their fears began to abate. The Directors sent out fifty extra soldiers, and thanked Commandeur BERCHEYOK for his activity in taking measures for preserving the river Demerara, and, as a further proof of their satisfaction, sent him a cask of red wine. In another letter they again thanked him for his vigilance, but nothing was said of GEDNEY CLARKE and his help, which came at the critical moment. Probably they looked upon the expedition from Barbados as being a private matter, and only intended, as was said in the Council of Justice, for the protection of the English plantations. Even the Indians received the thanks of the Company, and the Carib, Accaway and Arawack chiefs, who had rendered their assistance, were presented with silver necklaces, on which the monogram G.W.C. (Geoctroyed West-Indische Compagnie) was engraved.

On the 12th of May 1764, Commandeur BERCHEYOK died in Demerara, and was provisionally succeeded by MICHAEL LOOF, but this appointment was not confirmed by the Directors. The new Commandeur, JAN CORNELIS VAN DEN HEUVEL, was appointed on the 19th of August 1765, with a salary of thirty guilders a month, besides rations, this being an advance of ten guilders on that of his predecessors. He arrived in January following, and his arrival was announced in a Publication which is interesting as a specimen of these documents :—

We LAURENS STORM VAN S' GRAVESANDE, Directeur-General, and the Councillors of both Colleges, of the Colony and underlying Districts of Essequibo and Demerary, &c. &c. &c.

The **HERR JOHAN CORNELIS VAN DEN HEUVEL** has arrived by the ship *Land of Canaan*, in his quality as Commandeur, &c., &c., &c.

Also, their Honourables have heard that, notwithstanding the prohibition against the shipment of sugar from the colony, otherwise than by vessels going direct from here to Zeeland, some inhabitants, especially of Demerary, have shipped their sugar to St. Eustatius or elsewhere; this is strictly forbidden on pain of confiscation and a fine of three times the value on the planter or other contraveners, besides prosecution of the Captain by the Fiscal. And further, their Honourables offer a reward of 25 guilders per hog-head, for information of the shipment of sugar otherwise than permitted, and the names of the informers shall be kept secret.

Those who capture runaway slaves are bound to restore them to their owners.

The Prayer (Thanksgiving) Day will be held at the Fort on the second Wednesday in April. Rio Essequibo at Fort Zeelandia the 7th of January 1766.

The Ordinance of His Excellency and the Honourable Gentlemen Councillors.

The New Commandeur lived on Borsselen Island, where residences had lately been erected for him and his Assistant, together with a kitchen, Company's store, logie for the soldiers, and a stelling. **BEOCHEYCK** had resided on his plantation, the *Pearl*, which was on the east bank of the Demerara, nearly opposite Borsselen. **VAN DEN HEUVEL** was entirely subordinate to the Directeur-General and had received orders from the Directors not to introduce any alterations without consulting his superior.

Although it appeared as if the Commandeurship was now outside the family of **GRAVESANDE**, this was soon rectified by **VAN DEN HEUVEL** marrying the widow of **BEOCHEYCK**. The Directeur-General about this time lost another son named **GERAED JOHAN**, and the Directors condoled with him on his misfortunes. He worked hand in hand with his new son-in-law, and often visited Demerara to see how things were progressing. The Directors wrote to him in September 1765, thanking him for his energy in taking measures to improve the two rivers, at the same time promising an increase in the garrison, of sober, strong and good soldiers, although, they said, men of such characters

were rather hard to procure. They also gave him strict orders to collect the acre money, and to pass an Ordinance for a stamp duty, so as to increase the income of the colony. They could not do much to increase his salary, on account of the difficulty with the Ten, but they raised his Table Money from three to six hundred guilders, and sent him a cask of red wine as a present.

On the 18th of August 1766, a Predicant named HERMANUS LINGIUS was at last appointed, to look after the religious services in Demerara, he being probably a brother of the Minister of Essequibo. He preached in the Government building on Borsselen Island or at the houses of the planters in the neighbourhood, as there was no proper Church in Demerara at that time, nor even for a long time afterwards. Whether there was still an English Clergyman is doubtful, but it is probable that there was one in Demerara, and even a Roman Catholic priest, but, as these were discountenanced, they must have kept themselves in the background. Lutherans and Anglicans were tolerated, but Roman Catholics were disliked, while the authorities of both rivers refused permission for Jews to settle. As will be seen later, the inhabitants enforced the prohibition against Jews in opposition to the wishes of the Directors.

The long dispute between the Chamber of Zeeland and the Ten still hampered both Essequibo and Demerara, and disheartened the Directeur-General so much, that he became somewhat careless as to whether produce was shipped to Zeeland or not. The official exports were however increasing slowly, there having been shipped in 1764, 2956½ hhds. sugar, 31 brls and 211 bags coffee, and 2 bales cotton, in eight vessels, while in 1766 nine vessels took away 4120 hhds. sugar, 37 brls and 2532 bags coffee, and 101 bales cotton. It will be noticed that the Demerara coffee and cotton plantations were beginning to make an impres-

sion on the exports, but not to the extent which might be reasonably expected, nor sufficient to please the Directors. It had been reported to them that GRAVESANDE allowed vessels from Amsterdam to discharge and load, without the indispensable "wood and salt letter," and they blamed him very much, hinting at the same time that he appeared to be favourable to the other party. Being a planter himself, he naturally sympathised with the others in this matter and probably felt as strongly as they did in regard to the Zeeland monopoly. At any rate, he was so much hurt at the reproof of the Directors, that, when he was refused leave of absence, he sent in his resignation, which the Directors refused to accept, as they wished to get over their difficulty with the Ten before making any alterations in the colony.

About 1766, a bank was established in Amsterdam by HELM BODDAERT, to advance money to the planters of Essequibo and Demerara on mortgages, from which there followed an influx of capital into the colony. This did good for a time, but as it was mostly spent on plantations up the river, which became worn out in a few years, it ultimately caused a great deal of trouble.

In September 1765, GRAVESANDE reported to the Council of Policy the arrival of a vessel in Demerara, which had not entered at Fort Zeelandia. He had prohibited the shipping of produce by her, but on the petition of the inhabitants this was allowed on certain conditions. On the 6th of October 1766, regulations for a Council of Justice for Demerara, were passed by the Council of Essequibo. In the absence of the Commandeur, one of the Councillors from Essequibo was to preside, and in case of none of these being able to attend, the oldest Burgher Captain. This Council, which afterwards developed into the College of Keisheers, numbered six, and superintended the different districts, the Officers being at this time as follows :—

On the East Bank :

Captain P. HALBY from the Sea Coast to Land of Canaan

Lieutenant RUYSEN from Land of Canaan to plantation of J. VOLAER
(Elizabeth.)

Ensign CODIN from plantation of Volage to the last plantation.

On the West Bank.

Captain BOGAERT from last plantation to that of J. B. SLINGARDE,
(Berlin.)

Lieutenant DE SCHAADT from that of Slingarde to that of Heyl-
burg.

Ensign VAN DER LOTH from that of Heylburg to that of J BOODE in
Boeraserie.

Besides these there were Sergeants in each district.

The Burgher Officers met every three months at Borsse-
len, on the first Mondays in March, June, September, and
December, and were subject to a fine of fifty guilders for
absence without lawful excuse. In these districts they
were bound to maintain order, and respect for the regula-
tions, as well as for all commands of the Directeur-Gener-
al. All civil disputes, where the amount in question did
not exceed 150 guilders, as well as criminal matters, could
be decided by the College of Burgher Officers, but appeals
might be made to Essequibo.

In 1767, the first representatives of the Burghery or
citizens were, by Resolution of the Chamber of Zeeland,
admitted into the Council of Policy. Up to that time
this Council had consisted of the Directeur-General, the
Commandeur of Demerara, the Captain of the troops, the
Managers of the three Company's plantations, and the
Secretary. It was now decided that only the oldest Mana-
ger should have a seat, the other two being replaced by
two citizens. The Council of Justice now consisted of all
the Official Members of the other Council except the Com-
pany's Managers, together with four of the most influential
of the citizens, two from each river, those from Essequibo
being nominated by the College of Keisheers, and those
from Demerara, by the Burgher Officers. When a vacancy

occurred, the respective bodies nominated a double number of the most influential, pious, and learned of the Burghers, members of the Reformed Church, from whom the Councilors were chosen. No Fiscal having been yet appointed, the Directeur-General acted as Public Prosecutor, as well as President of all the Colleges. Demerara appears to have had a Council of petty affairs, consisting of the Commandeur and two of the Burgher Officers. None of these received any remuneration for their services, but when those from Demerara went to Fort Island, they were entitled to free board and lodging during the session. In each colony was a Vendue-Master and an Orphan Chamber, while the soldiers were under a Captain in Essequibo, and a Lieutenant in Demerara. The Secretary was the most important official next to the Directeur-General, and in some cases corresponded immediately with the Directors, being in this respect above the Commandeur of Demerara.

From the work of an English surgeon*, who lived in Demerara at this time, some further particulars may be gleaned concerning the condition of the two rivers. The Brandwagt was armed with several patereroes, these being quite insufficient to defend the river against even one vessel of any force, yet this was the only fortification in Demerara. On the Island Borsselen was the residence of the Commandeur, and there the Courts of Justice were held and the Company's troops stationed. Demerara promised to become a most flourishing colony if it received proper encouragement, but the Dutch did not bestow as much attention on these colonies as they deserved. The plantations were 750 roods deep, and varied from 500 to 1500 in façade, 24 ft being reserved between each for a road, in case a second row should be formed behind the first. Sugar plantations were the most profitable, but persons of small means contented themselves with coffee or cotton estates. The sugar

*Bancroft's Essay on the Natural History of Guiana.

mills were either driven by mules, obtained by illicit traffic with the Orinoco, or else by wind or water. The dwelling-houses were usually surrounded by piazzas, which were considered particularly convenient. The plantations near the coast were the most valuable, but more expensive, on account of the drainage required. Many of the largest and most flourishing plantations belonged to British subjects, who had succeeded in producing good rum, which the Dutch had not before their arrival known how to manufacture. The other inhabitants were French, Swiss and Germans, many of whom had been induced by the accidents of life to seek asylums in distant countries, from which they were often enabled to return in opulence. All labour was done by the negroes, and even the white mechanics did little more than oversee and direct the slaves, who were at least five times as numerous as the whites, and were therefore kept in submission by strict discipline, which not only contributed to the safety of the whites, but also to the happiness of the slaves. The writer implies that want of order tended to produce insurrections and riots, and that there could be no medium, otherwise the lives of the masters would be in imminent danger. Their evidence against a white man was not valid ; an attempt to strike one of the favoured race was punished by death, and the master and overseers not only had the power to inflict corporeal punishment, but if they killed a negro were only subject to a fine. This treatment had the appearance of cruelty, and could not be reconciled to the principles of justice and equity ; many things however, which were repugnant to humanity might be excused on account of their necessity, and for self preservation.

The expense of maintaining the slaves was very trifling. When purchased, each was supplied with a piece of ground, on which he worked on Sundays, and, after the first year had expired, he depended on this for ground provisions,

receiving in addition a weekly allowance of a pound and a half of salt fish, which was all that the master contributed to his support. The only clothing provided by the master, was a piece of coarse blue or brown linen, to wear below the waist, and a blanket to cover himself at night, when sleeping on the bare boards.

The slaves diminished in numbers unless recruited by fresh supplies from Africa. How this happened Dr. BANCROFT could not understand, as they were more healthy, robust and vigorous than their masters. They were indeed spurred to industry with the whip, but coarse food and hard labour were, he considered, always accompanied with the blessings of increased health and vigour, which the effeminate sons of luxury might justly envy, but could never attain. The Doctor thought the real cause of the decrease was the indiscriminate intercourse of the slave women with white men, and the numerous abortions produced by certain medicines. To prevent the latter pernicious practice, some of the planters had adopted a system of rewards and immunities to fruitful women.

The inhabitants derived a great deal of assistance from the Indians, some of whom resided on every plantation, and were employed mostly in hunting and fishing. These people were however given to intemperance, and their manners had become different from those of the natives in the interior, who had preserved their natural innocence and simplicity. Several of the most considerable families in Essequibo derived their origin from alliances with the Indians, by which connections great influence was gained by the Dutch. The Directeur-General reserved to himself the decision of their differences, and was able to prohibit the tribes from quarrelling with each other, and although he had no means of enforcing his commands, yet they gave him humble and implicit obedience.

There were no public roads, and therefore the only

means of travelling was by tent boats, provided with six to ten oars, rowed by Indians or negroes, and always with the tide. When the tide turned the traveller had no inn to stop at, but he was made welcome at any plantation, the hospitality of the colony not allowing money to be received anywhere for food or drink, and a stranger was welcome to remain for months or even years.

From the instructions to the Captain of a slave vessel we are able to understand the manner of doing business in Demerara at this time. He was ordered to take his cargo there, and on his arrival put himself in communication with the consignees, who would provide a medical officer, who together with the ship's surgeon, would assort the negroes, and separate the healthy and strong from those who were sickly or weak. After the sorting was finished, the healthy negroes were to be divided into seven lots, four of which were to be delivered to the consignees, while the remaining three lots, and the sick, were to be sold by public vendue on account of the charterers. The cargo was estimated at about three hundred, of whom it was expected that twenty would be set aside, leaving 160 for the consignees and 120 to those interested in the vessel. The Captain was to use his judgment as to the disposing of the lots belonging to the latter, but the sick were to be got rid of at once, by public vendue, for what they would fetch. He must collect from the consignees, within three months, 330 guilders per head, in good bills of exchange at six months, and give Mr. E., for his trouble in looking after the consignment, a commission of one and a half per cent., and if he (Mr. E.) should provide a cargo within three months, five per cent on its value. The Captain was expected to get more than 330 guilders per head for those belonging to the charterers, which he might sell for produce or otherwise to the best advantage. *

* Brieven, Aristodemas en Sincerus.

The planters of Demerara still complained of the want of sufficient slaves, and their high prices. Even GRAVESANDE himself complained in 1764, that they had been sold at exorbitant prices, 400 to 450 guilders being commonly paid, while many exceeded 600 guilders per head. Secretary SPOORS, as Vendue Master, seemed to do pretty much as he liked, preferring to send a slave vessel away with her cargo of negroes untouched, rather than run any risk, although the debts on slaves were preferent, and he could order an immediate execution if the instalments were not paid when due.

From 1764 to 1769, GEDNEY CLARKE and his son were continually bringing forward their claim for the expenses of the Barbados reinforcements, and keeping the matter before the Directors. The meanness of the Company gave them the opportunity of disputing their responsibility, on the ground that the expedition was authorised neither by the Directors nor any person in authority in the two rivers. The CLARKES were willing to take half the cost, which amounted to £8000, but the Directors would only authorise one third of the claim, and when an extra head-tax of 2 guilders was imposed to pay this, the colonists protested against it. Disputes of a similar nature often cropped up later, but none of them show more than this the general pettiness of everything connected with the protection and defence of the colony. Of course the Directeur-General considered the claim as an honest one, but could do nothing in his official capacity, especially when his Council was ready to protest, for fear of extra taxes.*

On the 25th of October 1766, the inhabitants of both colonies were alarmed by severe earthquake shocks, which were said to have lasted five minutes. Some of the brick walls fell down, bells rang, crockery flew off the shelves, and muskets were thrown down from their supports. This

* It does not appear that the Clarkes ever received any portion of their claim.

was followed on the 24th and 27th by slighter shocks, which put the people in great fear and caused them to run out of their houses, but very little real damage resulted.

GRAVESANDE still had an hankering after the supposed riches of the interior, and reported to the Directors in 1765, that one of his pioneers had seen mountains far up the Masaruni, that looked as if they had pyramids on the top. This was probably Roraima, and the Directors told GRAVESANDE to send some one to the place to look for gold and silver, but as nothing came of it, it may be presumed that the cost of the expedition prevented its being carried out, especially as the Directeur-General was not on very good terms with the Chamber at this time. In 1769, however, GRAVESANDE sent GERRET JANSON, the post-holder of Arinda, up the Essequibo and Rupununi, to seek for crystal mines. He went up the river Mahu to Lake Amucu, and found the hitherto unknown tribe, the Wapisianas, who had killed three Europeans some time previous, but received JANSON in a kindly manner. They gave him samples of crystals and nitre, but would not allow him to search for them, or show him where they were to be found. The assistant post-holder afterwards visited them on a trading expedition without much benefit, and, as these expeditions were very expensive, and brought nothing valuable, they were discouraged by the Directors.

In 1768, a negro named TAMPOCO, who had been whipped and condemned to work in chains for life, but afterwards pardoned, reported having discovered a camp of bush negroes near the Rupununi, who were under a Berbice runaway named PETER. GRAVESANDE collected a party of Caribs, and sent them with TAMPOCO, to destroy the camp, who on their return reported that they had killed PETER and some of the others, and exhibited their barbecued right hands as evidence. Shortly afterwards PETER himself came down with a party of Arawacks, and made a complaint

that TAMPOCO and the Caribs had attacked his village, and murdered his wife and children. Pending further enquiry, TAMPOCO was locked up, but he managed to hang himself before the investigation took place.

The Spaniards from the Orinoco sometimes came as far as the post, which had been lately established near the mouth of the Moroco. In April 1769, a party, consisting of two Franciscan priests and ten other Spaniards, came to the post, to look for some Indians who had run away from the Missions, and applied to the post-holder to buy provisions. The provision having been sold and paid for, the party went further on their search. The cowardly post-holder got so frightened that he would not wait for their return but hid himself in the bush, with his slaves and goods, so that when the party came back for more provisions, they found the place deserted, except by two Indian women. These they took away, in revenge for the post-holder's foolishness, and threatened to confiscate everything, if they could find it. In returning towards the Orinoco they found a soldier who had been to that river and captured two runaways; these latter they took away, on the plea that they had been captured on Spanish territory, leaving the soldier to go back and report the matter.

By this time, the plantations in Demerara were all, more or less, under cultivation, but the number of acres planted on each was very small in proportion to the area of the estates. Almost all the land along the West Coast had been granted, so that there were now about 130 plantations in Demerara, and only about 70 in Essequibo, the younger colony outstripping the other in number already, although not yet quite equal in the quantity of land under cultivation. At least a third of the plantations in Demerara were in the hands of English settlers, and the necessity for further expansion was already beginning to

be felt. GEDNEY CLARKE saw the pressing need for a proper seat of government near the mouth of the river, in 1763, and the matter became apparent to the authorities about 1770. Now that the plantations had extended so far below Borsselen Island, the site of the government office became very inconvenient. Commandeur VAN DEN HEUVEL received six of the colony slaves to help him in building a house near the Brandwagt, in July 1770, so that it appears as if he had some idea of living there himself. Vessels coming to Demerara, where they were now allowed to enter without going to Fort Island, found it very troublesome to have to go up the river, and discharge or load a cargo for, or from, one of the coast estates. The buildings on the island were also getting out of repair, and there was room neither for a proper set of government offices nor a fort. The inhabitants wanted a fort that could protect the river, but it was quite obvious that nothing on Borsselen Island could do that. A Brandwagt was however established on the island, protected by a battery, and manned by a small garrison. The Commandeur would not hear of removing the seat of government, but persisted in recommending the island as the best place, probably because it was so conveniently situated for his own plantation.

VAN DEN HEUVEL did not care very much for the welfare of Demerara, but looked more after his private estate. At first, he was in hopes of succeeding his father-in-law as Directeur-General, but afterwards he became quite disgusted with the Zealand Chamber and its petty economies. His salary of thirty guilders a month was even considered quite absurd by the English planters, who paid about the same to their overseers, with better board and lodging. Some of the settlers offered to double it out of their own pockets, and VAN DEN HEUVEL wrote to the Directors asking them to allow this, but they indignantly refused. It would never do to let a Commandeur be under obliga-

tions to the private planters, but they were too mean to raise the salary themselves. This was the "last straw," and ended in his resignation, which was accepted on the 24th of December, 1770.

Meanwhile, the dispute between the Chamber of Zeeland and the Ten, had been going on at intervals since 1750, without there appearing to be the least probability of a settlement, so that at last both parties got tired, and agreed to submit it to the arbitration of the Stadtholder, on the 17th August, 1770. The Prince having accepted this proposal, gave his decision on the 15th of October following. He did not agree with Zeeland, but decided that the monopoly of trade and navigation could not belong to any particular section of the Company, to the exclusion of the others, unless a law to that effect had been passed by the States General, therefore all the inhabitants of the Netherlands were entitled to trade to Demerara and Essequibo, without permission of the Chamber of Zeeland, nevertheless, that Chamber, on account of its trouble with the colony, ought to have a reasonable share of the trade assured to it. This decision having been accepted by both parties, the Ten agreed in December following, that Zeeland should be entitled to send sixteen vessels annually before any others would be allowed to trade there, after which the navigation would be free; thus the monopoly now became a right of preference.

GRAVESANDE had remained as Directeur-General on sufferance, awaiting the decision of the Directors as to his resignation, who, in their turn put off everything until the termination of the dispute. In the last two or three years, he had become quite careless, spending a great deal of his time in Demerara, with Mrs. VAN DEN HEUVEL. The final breach was made in 1769, when he supported a petition of the planters, to be allowed to import their own slaves on payment of a tax to the Company. This was simply ruin-

ous, as they considered, and touched them to the quick in the most tender place. The slave trade was their only monopoly; and to suggest that this should be free, and in their own colony, was quite preposterous. To add to his culpability, in their eyes, it had been reported that he had allowed a cargo of slaves to be imported by private persons, consisting of 450 head, of the value of £150,000. They would not however, let the Directeur-General resign as yet, but wanted him to stay until certain alterations were made. This did not suit GRAVESANDE, who, after the reprimands he had received, was determined to retire, and therefore applied to both the Stadtholder and the Ten, and at last, on the 1st of July 1772, his resignation was accepted. Up to this time, no Commandeur had been appointed in place of VAN DEN HEUVEL, so that it may be presumed the official business of Demerara was done in a very slipshod manner, which was so much the better for the colonists, as they had greater freedom.

From the official returns of the last three years of the Zeeland monopoly, it does not appear that the progress made was very great, but as things became very loose at this time, it may be presumed that the illegal shipments of produce were larger than usual. In the three years, 1768-70, seven, nine and eight vessels, took away 2,896½ hhds., 3,530½ hhds., and 2,795 hhds. sugar; 166 brls. and 2,510 bags, 491 brls. and 1,715 bags, and 499 brls. and 1,603 bags coffee; and 66, 312, and 337 bales cotton. One slave vessel arrived in each of these years. The increase of coffee and cotton is notable, and shows that the planters in the lower Demerara were increasing their cultivation.

The following extracts from the "Letters of ARISTODEMUS" and SINCERUS," will give some idea of the progress of the two rivers during the last years of GRAVESANDE's administration:—

"The colony of Essequibo and Demerara was for a long time hardly known as an agricultural settlement, either by the authorities of the Netherlands or the people themselves, except only to Zeeland, and even now it is not generally acknowledged as such.

Governor Gravesande in 1765, informed the Company that Essequibo sugar was being sold in the bay of St. Eustatius, whereupon, in 1766, a publication was made prohibiting shipments elsewhere than to the Netherlands. At this time little or nothing was known of coffee or cotton, and these products were considered of little value. About 1766 and 1767 the plantations Princess Carolina, Soesdyk, La Retraite, De Laurentia, and those of Abel Boyer, Des Granges, &c., in Demerara, as well as those of N. A. Schultz in Essequibo, began to yield some coffee. This having attracted the attention of the Directeur-General, he in a speech, declared that coffee would in a few years become one of the principal products, and be equal with sugar, and that he intended to write to the Company to order the exportation of that, as well as sugar, to be forbidden, otherwise than to Zeeland. Whether a publication to this effect was made, I do not know, but Gravesande ordered the officers who superintended the clearances of vessels, to refuse to allow coffee and cotton to be shipped in foreign bottoms.

Mr. Gravesande was a high-handed man; if it came into his head to give an order, it was published in the name of *their Noble Great Honourables the Gentlemen Directors, &c., &c., &c.*, when perhaps no vessel had arrived during the previous three months. Nobody could contest the matter; Messrs. Spoors and Rousselet being both dead, and the office of Secretary performed gratis by somebody or other, who received sixteen guilders a month and a half ration of meat and flour, with five per cent for stoppages. The Councillors of Policy were Messrs.——— and———, sons in law of the old gentleman, and two or three Managers of the Company's estates, not one of whom dared to dispute, or even doubt, the word of Gravesande. I would not have advised any one of those in the Council at that time, to even ask the Directeur-General for an insight into the letters of the Company; if a letter did arrive, and there was anything in it complimentary to himself, he would read it to the *fellows*, but immediately afterwards the letter disappeared in his pocket; In fact you can hardly imagine in what an arbitrary manner things were carried out at that time."

CHAPTER XI.

THE "TWO RIVERS" REORGANISED, 1772—1780.

Trotz and Schuylenburg appointed Directeur-General and Commandeur—Fiscal appointed—Instructions to Directeur-General, Fiscal and Secretary—New regulations—Combined Council—Were Essequibo and Demerara separate colonies?—Exports—Slave revolt—Canals projected—Land regulations—Failures among the planters in the upper Demerara—Letters of the Ten—Jews not allowed to settle—Appeals to the States General—Death of Gravesande—Land Surveyors—Company's Plantations—Plantations on site of Georgetown—Project for a new town—Decided to repair offices on Borsselen—Colony Ongeld—Roads and Bridges—Disputes between the authorities of the two rivers—Desertion of slaves to the Orinoco—Quarrel between Captain Severyn and the Directeur-General—Disputes as to precedence—Regulations for trading vessels—Despotism of the Company—Exports—Taxes—Rumours of war with England—Defenceless state of Demerara.

THE year 1772 saw the commencement of a new era for Demerara and Essequibo. The Chamber of Zeeland having been obliged to retire to its subordinate position, the Ten assumed the supreme control of the two rivers. On the 5th of July, GEORGE HENDRIK TROTZ, a planter and Councillor of Essequibo, being then in the Netherlands, was appointed Directeur-General, while PAULUS VAN SCHUYLENBURG at the same time became Commandeur of Demerara. Both these appointments were made by the Stadtholder, from nominations of the Ten, three persons having been named for each office. The two officials arrived in Essequibo on the 27th of November following, and by assuming their respective duties, left GRAVESANDE free to retire to his private plantation, on which he resided until his death.

The Ten thought it desirable to appoint a Fiscal, as the necessity for a legal functionary had long been felt, and this was done without consulting Zeeland. Not satisfied with this, which the late authorities thought undue interference, they went so far as to appoint several minor officials, thus ignoring the Chamber of Zeeland altogether; this made the Directors very sore. As the Chamber had looked after the interests of the two rivers for so long, and knew them so well, they considered it an insult that the Ten should now interfere in everything. The Ten declared that, having been placed in charge of the interests of the Company, they were entitled to have the supreme control, and that Zeeland had no more right to interfere than had any other of the Chambers. This declaration was confirmed by the States General, and notified to the Chamber on the 17th of March 1773, when the Directors were informed that they would be allowed to superintend the colonies in the name of the Company, while the Ten reserved their right to general supervision.

Meanwhile, the Ten were busily at work making strict regulations for all the officials, from the highest to the lowest, beginning with the Directeur-General and the Council of Policy. The Instructions to the Directeur-General were considered in the light of a constitution by the planters, who were pleased to see that so much interest was being taken in the two rivers, as they were now called. The following is an abstract of the document:—

1. He shall have full authority, by water and land, over the troops, fortifications, &c., and all the inhabitants shall be bound to obey and execute his orders.
2. The troops and inhabitants shall take from him, anew, the oaths of allegiance.
3. He shall not administer justice, except with, and in the presence of, the Council of Justice.
4. He shall promote, as far as lies in his power, the knowledge of God and the true Reformed Christian Religion.
5. He shall appoint some person to perform Divine Service when the Predicant is sick.

6. In matters of importance he shall convene the Council of Policy, which shall consist of, first, the Directeur-General; second, the Captain Commandant; third, the Fiscal; fourth, the Vendue-Master, and four other persons chosen from the most important, capable and pious of the inhabitants, members of the Reformed Church.

The Council of Justice shall consist of the same persons, with the exception of the Fiscal.

Two or more persons related, either in the ascending or descending line, shall not be permitted to be Councillors at the same time, nor yet a father-in-law and his son-in-law, two brothers, or two brothers-in-law.

7. The Directeur-General shall be President of the Council of Policy as well as that of Justice, and when the votes are equal he shall have a casting vote. No resolution or decision shall be arrived at, unless a majority of the Council be present.

8. The Councils of Policy and Justice shall not only deal with such matters as may be brought before them by the Directeur-General, but also with all matters of civil and criminal justice.

9. The Directeur-General shall open all letters and despatches in the presence of one of the Councillors and the Secretary; no document shall be taken away by any Councillor except with the consent of the whole, but all papers shall be given for perusal or examination whenever they may be required.

10. The Directeur-General shall see that all persons in the service of the Company perform their duties faithfully, and shall never prefer mercy to strict justice on those who neglect them.

11. He shall, within the first three months of every year, make out an estimate of what will be required by the military for the ensuing year.

12. He shall keep strict control over everything belonging to the colony, and inspect the magazine and stores at least once in every three months.

13. He shall send to the Company, every three months, a statement of the financial position of the colony.

14. He shall keep, or order to be kept, a strict account of the ways and means of the Company in the colony.

15. He shall keep, or order to be kept, proper inventories of all the Company's letters, charters, books and papers, and have all these carefully and properly indexed, and also take care that none of them are lost.

16. In case of attack by an enemy, or an insurrection, the Directeur-General shall courageously and faithfully defend the colony to the very last.

17. He shall send to the Ten a correct statement of the number of the Company's buildings, and an account of their condition.

18. He shall neither diminish nor increase the number of fortifications without consent of the Ten.

19. He shall take especial care that none of the stores are pilfered.

20. He shall keep a daily register of everything that happens in the colony, whether on land or water.

21. With the Council of Policy, he shall see that the fortifications are kept in proper order.

22. He shall forward every three months a muster-roll of all the officials, high and low, the military and the slaves, also a list of the incoming and outgoing vessels, with their cargoes, &c.

23. He shall see that the cultivation of vegetables and other provisions is properly attended to every year, and that a sufficient stock of fish is prepared in the dry season to serve as food during the wet weather.

24. He shall see that all the books are properly kept.

25. He shall have no power to increase the salary of any official.

26. He shall not dismiss any of the Company's servants unless he is able to justify himself to the Ten.

27. In case he should have a complaint to make against any of the officials he shall put his charge in writing and forward it to the Directors.

28. He shall grant honourable dismissal to all such officials as may desire it, at the expiration of their services, and also give them passports and free passages to Europe.

29. He shall pay particular attention to the Indians and see that none of them are oppressed in any way.

30. He shall strictly guard against contraband trade in any form.

31. He shall properly regulate the collecting of all colony taxes.

32. To prevent fraud, he shall publicly make known what descriptions of produce and their quantities, are shipped to Europe.

33. He shall allow slaves to be freely purchased from Dutch ships by the colonists.

34. He, together with the Council of Policy, is recommended to observe carefully and inform the Company, what articles of produce might in his or their opinion, be made profitable to the Company.

35. It is positively forbidden to him, as also to all officials, from the highest to the lowest, to appropriate to their own use anything belonging to the Company.

36. He shall strictly obey the orders contained in the foregoing Articles, and all other orders that may be given from time to time.

The Instructions for the Fiscal were as follows ;—

1. He shall keep, protect and maintain with all diligence, earnestness and zeal, all the Company's rights, domains, jurisdictions and authority.

2. He shall take action against all who contravene the existing placats, ordinances, orders, instructions and regulations.

3. He shall not make any private or preliminary enquiry into a case without consent of the Directeur-General and Councillors.

4. He shall act with the greatest circumspection in all cases, and maturely consider whatever may be alleged in defense of prisoners or accused persons.

5. He shall scrupulously observe the placata, ordinances, resolutions, articulated letter, &c., of their High Mightinesses the States General, and of the Company.

6. He shall search every vessel immediately on her arrival, or have her searched by his sworn deputy.

7. He shall proceed in law against any one found violating the rights of the Company, and confiscate the goods of the guilty parties.

8. He shall guard against the clandestine exportation of any goods.

9. He shall see that no foreign vessel departs without a clearance.

10. He shall receive a third of all confiscated vessels, goods and slaves, after deducting expenses.

11. He shall make duplicates of all inventories, informations, declarations, sentences, and all other documents relating to suits.

12. He shall appoint two or three constables (*dienaars*) and should he require further assistance he shall apply to the Directeur-General.

13. He shall not compromise any suit, either criminal or civil.

14. He shall see that all criminal sentences are carried out properly.

15. He shall not appropriate any of the Company's effects, slaves, ships, goods, ammunition or anything whatsoever.

The Secretary and Book-keeper was to obey the Directeur-General, assist at the meetings of both Councils, write the minutes, see that all documents were properly made out and registered, take care that the arguments in the Council of Justice were properly recorded, and carefully preserve all documents. He was also ordered to see that all persons received [their letters without delay,] and not to refuse his services to any one, to keep his books as ordered by the Ten, never to absent himself without permission of the Directeur-General, and finally perform all his duties secretly, obediently and faithfully, as become a good and trustworthy Secretary and Book-keeper.

Other new officials were also appointed, including a Vendue-Master, Captain Commandant and Predicant, all of whom received particular instructions, so that the looseness which had existed under the administration of GRAVESANDE,

should be prevented in future. The planters of Demerara had complained of the necessity of going to Essequibo to attend the Councils, and some of the Councillors protested in April 1772 against being bound to go to Fort Island, unless compensation was allowed. It was therefore decided that there should now be Councils of Policy and Justice in both rivers, those in Essequibo being under the Presidency of Directeur-General, while in Demerara the Commandeur was to be President. The composition of these Councils may be seen in the foregoing instructions, the Fiscal having no seat in that of Justice because he acted as public prosecutor. A College of Kiesheers was established in each river, as well as an Orphan Chamber, while the garrison was to consist of a hundred men in Essequibo and the same number in Demerara. Everything was put on a better footing; the Directeur-General received £150 a month and £1,200 per annum table money; the Commandeur £100 and £600 table money; the Captain Commandant of each colony £75; Fiscal £60, and Secretary £50. From the highest to the lowest they all received rations and stores; soldiers and lower servants being entitled to one ration, military and higher officials, two or three, while the Directeur-General and Commandeur were each allowed six,

The criminal Ordinance of PHILIP II. (published July 9th 1570) now became the authority for the Council of Justice, and by Resolution of the States General, October 4th 1774, "all the laws of Holland in general," in addition to those of the States General and the Company, were to guide their judgments. As may be supposed, a criminal law dating two hundred years before, was not very well suited to a colony, however, it was adopted and remained in force to a certain extent down to the union with Berbice in 1831. Some of its provisions were already unworkable, while none of them could be applied especially to the slaves. No Counsel was allowed to a prisoner, as the Fiscal was

supposed to be unbiassed, and if sufficient evidence could not be procured to convict him, he was to be put upon the rack, which torture might be repeated to a third time if he revoked his confession. Fortunately for Demerara and Essequibo there were no proper jails or instruments of torture, so that only one case can be found where the Councillors of Justice wanted to rack a prisoner, and as that happened while the colonies were under English rule, it was forbidden. A criminal might be released on bail, and if further evidence was found, be brought up for a new trial, while sentences were to be executed within twenty-four hours.

All these changes were opposed by the Chamber of Zeeland, who pretended that the two rivers were separated under the new arrangements. The Directors of the opposing Chamber forwarded a Memorial to the States General, who however approved of the action of the Ten, but as a little concession, ordered that the Directeur-General should have the general superintendence of both rivers, and that the Commandeur and two Councillors from Demerara should go to Essequibo once or twice a year, to form a Combined Council of Policy. This did not satisfy Zeeland, and the representatives of that province in the Ten went so far as to refuse to sign the Minutes of April 24th, 1773.

The Combined Council met on several occasions up to 1780, considering such matters as taxes, the boundary between the two rivers, the administration of justice, &c. The Directeur-General called a meeting when necessary, provision being made for boarding and lodging the Councillors and paying their expenses. For all matters peculiar to either river, such as trade, planting, the Militia and the Church, the two were separate.

The question has arisen in connection with a will as to whether the two rivers could be now considered as one

colony or two. It is a rather difficult point, in which the Zeeland Chamber and the Ten were not agreed, but as the States General appear to have considered them as one, their opinion, as the highest authority in the Netherlands, deserves some consideration. In 1774 Commandeur SCHUYLENBURG assumed such an independent position, that doubts were expressed as to the supremacy of the Directeur-General, and the Ten went so far as to ask the States General whether he was to be received in Demerara as chief, or as a private person. Notwithstanding this assumption of independence, everything points to the conclusion that the two rivers formed one colony and that the Directeur-General was head of both Essequibo and Demerara.*

All the changes referred to above, took place in the three years from 1772 to 1775, during which period the Ten were busily employed in making regulations for everything. Meanwhile the exports had risen considerably, partly on account of the greater freedom as far as the Netherlands were concerned, but more perhaps on account of the laws against smuggling being enforced. The first year that the two rivers were open to the whole Netherlands, 1771, thirteen vessels arrived, two being from Holland and the remainder from Zeeland, their homeward cargoes consisting of 4,127 hhds. sugar, 641 brls., and 3,538 bags coffee, and 162 bales cotton. Four of these had brought slaves, so that it would be natural to expect an increase of cultivation. In 1775 twenty-one vessels arrived, including three slavers, ten being from Zeeland and eleven from Holland, which carried away 4,937½ hhds. sugar, 2,317 brls. and 19,090 bags coffee, and 189 bales cotton.

* Although Essequibo and Demerara were sometimes spoken of as the Colony of Essequibo and Colony of Demerary or Colonies of Essequibo and Demerary, they were not known officially as separate, as may be seen from the following examples :—

"Der Rivier Essequibo en onderhoorige Zeekusten."

"Der Rivier Demerary en onderhoorige districten."

"De Colonie van Essequibo en Demerary."

"Commandeur en Raaden in Rio Demerary."

"Directeur-General der Rivieren en onderhoorige Districten van Essequibo en Demerary."

In November 1772 a slave insurrection took place in Essequibo, in the course of which two plantations were pillaged, but the strong measures of Burgher-Captain VAN DER HEYDEN, assisted by some Indians, soon suppressed the disturbance. To show their appreciation of his services, the Ten presented VAN DER HEYDEN with a silver coffee pot, of the value of £600, on which an inscription was engraved, while two other persons who had rendered good service received silver-hilted swords. The Indian Chiefs were presented with silver jewellery, while their men received more suitable articles, such as salem-pores, trumpets, looking-glasses, &c. The year following the Ten sent six silver necklaces for the Chiefs, but as presents had already been given them, these were returned. Later, twelve silver knobbed sticks were sent out, together with the same number of hats, trimmed with silver lace, to be presented to the Indian chieftains as badges of authority. Some disputes took place between the authorities of the two rivers as to paying the cost of suppressing this revolt, but the Ten decided in 1774 that it should be paid by both rivers.

In August 1773, JAN PIETER CAILLAET, a white man, instigated an insurrection among the slaves in Demerary which caused a great deal of trouble. Having ran away to Essequibo, he was captured and sent back for trial, on a charge of supplying slaves with weapons and ammunition, and plotting, advising, and urging them to murder P. C. Hooft and his wife, by which many whites, free people and negroes lost their lives. Being found guilty he was sentenced to be broken alive on the wheel, decapitated, and then burnt.

About this time the canals in Demerara were commenced. In 1771, TROTZ, before he became Directeur-General, received a concession to extend the Hobabo Creek to Essequibo, by means of a canal, which would come out opposite

Fort Island. This was intended to accommodate new settlers, as well as to open communication between the two rivers without the trouble of a sea voyage. Nothing was done at the time, and when the Directeur-General wanted to have the canal dug at the Company's expense, the Ten would not entertain such a costly project, especially as its great necessity was no longer felt, now that there were Councils in both rivers. By this time all the available land on the banks of the Demerara river had been taken up, as well as the best locations on the creeks. The west coast was also occupied, but plantations had hardly begun to extend to the east coast. To find room for new concessions four canals were projected, three of which were ultimately finished by means of labour supplied by the private planters. Numbers one and two were 60 feet wide and 10 feet deep, while number three was smaller. The land on either side was granted on condition that the portion of canal in front of the plantation should be kept up by its owner. The ten years freedom of taxes was still enjoyed by new settlers, and there was no difficulty in getting persons to take up land. Most of the concessions were now made by the Ten, who sent out new land regulations in 1773. Petitioners were to address themselves to the Ten, stating what plantations they had already, either owned by themselves or in partnership, and, if they had none, the Directeur-General and Council might grant a thousand acres for sugar, or five hundred for coffee. Those in Essequibo were to be in the upper district only, and every one was to build a house and commence cultivation within a year and six weeks after receiving the grant, or after publication of the regulations. If they did not comply with these conditions the land would be forfeited, and sold by public vendue for the benefit of the Company, the Directeur-General and Council being however empowered to grant an extension of time for lawful reasons. Any per-

son intending to abandon a plantation was bound to give notice at the Secretary's office six weeks before leaving it, if residing in the colony, and twelve months when living abroad. In September following, the Ten resolved that no one should be allowed to sell his concession within five years after it was granted. In 1773 a number of concessions were made to merchants and others of Amsterdam, for plantations in the Hobabo creek and No. 2 Canal, on similar terms to those in Essequibo, with the proviso that they were not to be alienated in any way before cultivation, except by death or insolvency.

In 1775 representations were made to the Ten by H. H. VAN DEN HEUVEL and others, of the great injury they were suffering from a certain canal (No. 2) being dug between the plantation *La Retraite*, and that of Mr. DALY (*Bellevue*) whereby the bush water was kept back and inundated their lands. They prayed that this might be prevented by opening a side dam, and the matter was referred to the Commandeur and Councillors, they being directed to take such measures as would as much as possible prevent injury to *La Retraite*.

Land speculation was still common, and it became necessary to prohibit the building of temporary houses on new plantations, by which the law was nominally complied with, but virtually evaded. By this time many of the estate owners in the upper districts of Demerara were in difficulties. They had received advances from Boddaert's bank in Amsterdam, and were unable to pay either interest or principal, while the mortgages were of very little value, because new and fertile land could be obtained for nothing. It was almost as cheap to get a new concession on the coast, as to clear the forest in the less fertile districts every five years, so that many of the old planters got new concessions in the names of merchants in Amsterdam. Difficulties were placed in the way of persons having a second grant,

with another ten years freedom of taxes, but these were easily evaded by putting it in the name of another person.

In September and October 1774, the Ten were very busy, and a few items from their letters will show what petty matters were regulated by them. It was thought desirable to encourage the trade with North America, against which export duties had been imposed, and they resolved on the 22nd of September that the duties should be reduced. The export of rum, they thought, should be encouraged, but not that of molasses, while the trade in timber should be restricted. The vessels should be visited immediately on their arrival, and if possible a soldier stationed on board to prevent illicit trade. It was resolved at the same time that the old Council of Policy should be replaced by a new one in accordance with the Instructions to the Directeur-General, and they also thought it desirable that the Councillors should serve six years, but this was never carried out, they being elected for life, or as long as they remained in the colony. No alteration was made in the Colleges of Kiesheers, except the rules as to relationship and strict enforcement of the prohibition against others than those of the Reformed Church. The acre-money was ordered to be enforced, but the Council would not hear of it and formally protested. Stamp duties however were imposed, transports and mortgages having to pay *f*3, wills and codicils *f*2, and petitions, summons, &c. 10 stivers. Proper registers of births, marriages and deaths, were also ordered to be kept. When an estate had its name changed both names were to be put on all documents, and when sold, the plantation must not be appraised beyond its real value. Mons. BEMINCLOS had proposed to them to open three or four of the principal creeks in the Demerara, to make them navigable, and to drain the land on their banks, so as to open up new plantations, but this was never carried out on account of the expense. It was thought desirable that a chart of both

rivers should be made by a Land Surveyor, that the Jews should not be allowed to settle, and that the ill-treatment of slaves should not be permitted.

The above is a specimen of the miscellaneous matters contained in one letter to the Directeur-General and Council, but this was followed by three others during the same month, and four in October, which show how hard they were working. General laws for both rivers were to be made, either in the Combined Council or by general consent, by correspondence. This Council was to consist of six members, three from each river, the Directeur-General and Commandeur always having seats, and in case of the votes being equal, the matter was to be referred to the Ten. Councillors from Demerara should be comfortably lodged and boarded, either on an estate, or in a house to be built for the purpose. No person was to leave the colony without notice to his creditors, and no mortgage was to be passed until all taxes and dues were paid. All public taxes were to be passed at the Combined Councils, and be the same for both rivers. Both Councils should be made acquainted with all the laws and regulations of the Ten. The fees were to be the same in both rivers, and Church matters were to be kept separate. Foreign cloth was to be prohibited, while the export duty on rum might be reduced to *f*1 per hhd. They directed the manner in which official letters should be written, and gave rules as to order of precedence, the Directeur-General coming first, then the Commandeur, followed by the Councillors according to seniority. Taxes might be paid in sugar and coffee, and foreigners might be sued for debts contracted abroad, no debt contracted in the two rivers being considered preferent. A list of law books was also made out, including among others the *Groet Placaat Boek*, *VOET*, *VAN LEEWEN*, the *Octrooi* and *Artikel-Brief*. *ABRAHAM D'AZEVEDO*, a Jew, had applied for permission to reside in Demerara, as

a merchant, but the colonists objected to allow this, and the Ten asked why Jews were to be excluded.

On the 20th March 1775, the Ten prohibited the exportation of ammunition of war to North America, so as to avoid a quarrel with the English, and on the 30th of May following, it appears as if the possibility of such a war was foreseen, as they ordered that in case it should be necessary to defend the two rivers, the Commandeur should be under the Directeur-General, who would act as Commander-in-Chief. At the same time they ordered that a Combined Council should be held once or twice a year, and that the Commandeur should be bound by its decisions.

The question of the Ten as to why Jews should not be allowed to settle in Demerara, was answered by the Commandeur in May 1775. He considered that they were quite useless in an agricultural settlement, as most of them were very poor, and unless they got large advances from somewhere would only become a burden to the colony. They had no knowledge of planting and could only be traders, and very petty ones too, going about among the negroes and coloured people, and inducing them to pilfer from the planters. The negroes were already inclined to make a show with trinkets and ornaments, and the Council considered that they would be ruined by the Jew pedlars. Besides this they would smuggle slaves and goods in foreign vessels, and prevent their slaves from working on the sabbath, as well as Sunday, compelling them to do extra work on the other days, to make up for the loss. Again, they punished the negroes by stopping their rations, which led to dissatisfaction, and might cause disturbances.

At this time the prejudice against Jews was common to the two rivers and Berbice, having been brought from Surinam, where a strong feeling of antagonism had lately arisen. They formed about a third of the population of that

colony, there being about 850 Portuguese and 450 German Jews there, but only 46 estates, out of the total of 590, were owned by these people. For some years past they had been subject to petty persecution, which went so far that the Stadtholder was asked to deprive them of their privileges, but this being against the Charter of the colony, as well as the principles of the Dutch Government, it could not be carried out. The Ten did not wish to make any trouble about the matter, so they refused permits to Jews, but, as in Berbice, a few plantations were owned by them.

Appeals were allowed to the States General, and in 1772 the Revd. G. M. SCHMIDT, ex-minister of the Lutheran Church in Essequibo, prosecuted an appeal against the authorities of that river, and their High Mightinesses ordered all the necessary documents to be forwarded. This not being complied with, SCHMIDT wrote over and over again for three years, before they were forwarded to the Netherlands, while the case lasted down to 1795. In March 1772 they ordered (in the case of JOHN BIRMINGHAM) that nothing disrespectful to the authorities should be permitted, and especially prohibited scandalous and shocking expressions against the government in any written document,

LAURENS STORM VAN 's GRAVESANDE died on the 14th of August 1775, at the age of 71, and was buried in the Fort Island Church. His last communication to the Ten, was an application for the office of Vendue-Master of Demerara, for his son JEREMIAH, made about a month before his death. He must have felt great mortification at the many changes now being made, especially in comparing the salaries of the new officials with the paltry pittances formerly allowed.

At the meeting of the Combined Council held on the 29th of June 1775, regulations were made for Land Surveyors. There was to be one for each river, and they were

to prepare three charts of each concession, one for the Company, another for the Secretary's Office, and a third for the grantee. The fee for measuring was to be two stivers per acre, for which the whole square was to be measured, and at least three paals inserted, the first, ten roods from the shore, and the other two, fifty roods from the first and from each other. In case the whole depth was measured, the paals were to be a hundred roods from each other, two being placed at each corner, the Surveyor being entitled to charge a ducat each for these.

The Company's plantations were by this time of very little importance, and the Ten wanted to sell them. The matter was discussed in the Combined Council February 26th 1776. The Directeur-General was of opinion that only one of the plantations would be likely to find a purchaser, he therefore advocated the removal of all the slaves to that, so as to make it fetch a better price. The Commandeur was of opinion that it would be dangerous to the colony to remove the slaves, and therefore he thought things should remain as they were. Plantation *Luyzbergen* on Hog Island, would have done very well, if the wind-mill had been erected six hundred roods to the southward, so that the wind might not be cut off by the corner of Leguan Island. If this was altered, and a good manager, who knew something of planting, placed on it, the estate would pay well if not handsomely, and be well worth the trouble. It would be more to the interest of the Company not to incur any expense with *Agtekerke* because the water supply was uncertain, it being very small in dry weather when the best sugar was made. On that plantation as well as *Duynenburg*, the works were too far from the cane fields, so that as much time was conveyed in the carriage of the canes, as in making the sugar.

Captain SEVERYN was against any change unless the plantations were put under entirely new management.

Councillor JOSEPH BOURDA was of opinion that competent managers ought to be employed, not people at £30 a month with liberty as it were to get their living from the still and molasses tank. The slaves should have proper rations, and provision grounds should be planted, then they might take down the buildings and works of *Duynenburg* and *Agtekerke*, build a good factory at *Luyxbergen*, and bring all the slaves together, which would double the present revenue, as the management would be easier, the work regular, and there would be a saving all round.

In the course of the discussion, it was mentioned that the danger in removing slaves from their old plantations, was on account of their attachment to them; they could not separate the negroes for fear of trouble, and could not sell them except as a whole. It was finally resolved that the difficulties in making any alterations were too great, so that it was decided to let the plantations remain as they were.

The above decision is an example of the power of a body of slaves in preventing improvements, to which free labourers would have imposed no obstacles. From the statements of the abolitionists at the beginning of this century, it would appear that a slave was treated as a mere animal, but the evidence of the records of this colony shows that the greatest circumspection was used when they were required to do anything which they all disliked.

The Company's three plantations were then under the superintendence of CORNELIS BOTER, who had been appointed as Administrator by the Ten. He was authorised on the 8th of December 1777, to remove the mills and negro houses of *Duynenburg* to any place he thought most suitable, and to keep a few Indians on the plantations. He was to appropriate a house at Fort Zeelandia for boarding the members of the Combined Council, when they met there, and to look after the blacksmith and the brick maker. He was allowed the exclusive right of fishing in the Boerasirie

Creek at the same time, probably in compliance with his own request.

It will be interesting to note that the plantations from the mouth of the river Demerara upwards to *Houston* were in 1777 as follows :—

1. (*Eve Leary*) J. BOGMAN,
Company's Path.
2. *La Bourgade*, J. SALIGNAC,
Company's Path.
3. *Vlissengen*, J. BOURDA,
Company's Brandwagt.
4. *Werk-en-Bust*, ROEDBERG & WEBER,
Company's Path.
- 5: *Le Repentir*, P. L. DE SAFFON.
6. *La Penitence*, J. F. DE SAFFON,
Path of Two Chains.
7. *Buimveldt* (Ruymzigt) C. VAN DER OURDERMEULEN and P. VAN
HELSDINGEN,
Company's Path.
8. *Zorg-en-Hoop* (Houston) B. VAN DER SANTHEUVEL & J. E. DE VOGT.

In 1775 there had been a dispute about some land near the Brandwagt, the matter being brought before the Zeeland Chamber and referred to the Commandeur and Councillors. It appears that CORNELIS LEARY had received a grant of the plantation known as *De Leary*, and, when he died, JOHN BIRMINGHAM took possession of it, which caused the widow to apply for an interdict against him. Meanwhile she had married JACOB BOGMAN, and the Zeeland Directors confirmed her and her husband in possession of the property. In November of this year JACOB BOGMAN petitioned for one thousand acres near the plantation of his wife, and also to be allowed to dig a canal through the Company's path. This appears to have been granted, the new concession being probably Plantations *Thomas* and *Kitty*, and the proposed canal, that known now as the Cuming's Canal, from THOMAS CUMING, who owned these estates, as well as *La Bourgade*, some years afterwards.

About 1777, the necessity for a proper seat of government in Demerara became obvious. The Ten objected to spend money on Borsselen Island from its being too small, and because neither good water nor firewood could be obtained without bringing them from a distance. Several places were recommended, but that which received most attention was Plantation *Jonge Rachel*, now a part of Plantation *Wales*. Being situated at the mouth of the Hobaboe Creek, there was plenty of fresh water to be obtained, while the back lands were covered with forest, and again the anchorage in front was considered suitable in every respect. The Commandeur however did not care to remove the seat of government, as it was so very convenient to his own Plantation, *Land of Canaan*, where he was obliged to reside because the house on Borsselen Island was falling to pieces. His idea was to establish a town on the east bank of the river, opposite the then seat of government, between *De Parel* and *Huis t'Overden*. To back him up he sent to Surinam for the two engineers J. O. and C. HENEMAN, who made plans and estimates for a town on this spot, to cost about f200,000, and also for strengthening Borsselen Island. One of the proposals included a strong fort at the mouth of the river, in place of the *Brandwagt*. In May 1779 it was decided that as a new town would be too expensive, new buildings should be erected on Borsselen Island, the engineer C. C. CANNE being sent to Demerara as Inspector of the Company's Buildings and to carry out the work. He was directed to commence the erection of houses for the Commandeur and Captain at once, as well as proper barracks for the soldiers, in accordance with plans drawn up by the Chamber of Amsterdam.

The engineer found plenty of work, as all the government buildings in both rivers required repairs, but as there was very little money to spare, these were done in as mean a way as possible. To pay the cost of the improvements,

attempts were made to raise the taxes, but these were firmly resisted by the planters. The head-tax of two and a half guilders, had become a regular impost, but anything beyond could never be enforced, and this was, with the exception of the export and import duties, and the petty amount received from stamps, all that the Company got to pay the expenses of government. Now that they had representatives in the Council of Policy, however, the planters were willing to pay an extraordinary tax occasionally, which was always imposed by their consent, and kept quite separate from the Company's revenue. Several disputes took place between the Council and the Ten, in connection with this, as the latter sometimes wanted certain expenses to be paid from the Colony Ongeld, which the inhabitants considered ought to come from the Company's Chest. In 1776 an expedition was sent to the Governor of Spanish Guiana to bring back some runaway slaves, the expenses of which were £1,140 and 100 rix dollars. The amount was provisionally paid from the Colony Chest, and the Council of Policy of Essequibo petitioned the Ten that it might be refunded from the Company's Chest, but this was refused, on the ground that it had been incurred for the benefit of the planters and inhabitants.

In 1777, the canals being almost finished, the Commandeur began to think of the necessity for public roads, and on April 14th 1778 the first publication was made, ordering the planters on the banks of the Demerara to make up proper bridle paths and bridges through their estates. This was strenuously objected to, and could not be enforced for some years afterwards. One of the difficulties in getting a continuous road, was the Company's paths (which were 5 roods in façade in Essequibo and 10 in Demerara) between the plantations, for which no provision was made. The planter might make a road through his property, but the Company did not provide for its con-

tinuation, and then the bridges gave a great deal of trouble. The Ten approved of the law in 1780, but the difficulties of the next five years kept it from becoming of much use to the colony. A plan for a bridge over the Boerasirie Creek was considered by the heads of the two rivers in May 1779, but it was not built for some time afterwards.

The authorities of the two rivers did not agree very well, probably on account of the Commandeur refusing to recognise the Directeur-General as his superior officer.

From 1774 to 1776, there were disputes as to the right of Demerara to have copies of the Archives of the colony, the Directeur-General refusing to allow this, but on the matter being referred to the Company, it was decided that it be permitted, the result being the copies now in the Government Secretary's office. On the 1st of October 1777, Councillor BOURDA wrote to the Directeur-General, objecting to his calling a Combined Council at this time, as it would deprive Demerara of the Commandeur and two Councillors, at a critical period, when English privateers might at any moment arrive to injure and pillage that river. The Directeur-General, in answer, said that if the members from Demerara did not come to the Council each would have to pay a hundred guilders. In 1778, a thousand guilders was granted to the members, as compensation for their trouble, while the Councillors of Policy and the Orphan Masters in Essequibo resolved about the same time, on account of the unsatisfactory state of the colony, to renounce their salaries and emoluments. In March 1777, the Company prohibited the authorities honouring the flags of the revolted American Colonies of Great Britain, while in the following month they were prohibited from exporting ammunition of war to North America.

In May 1778 there was a revolt of slaves on Plantation *Duynenburg*, some of the negroes succeeding in making their escape to the Orinoco, which led to a number of pre-

cautions being taken to prevent this in future. On the 24th of June, the Ten considered the position of the Maroco Post, and thought it desirable to establish another post nearer the mouth of the Maroco river, to prevent runaway soldiers and slaves passing towards the Orinoco. This was to be manned by a corporal, a gunner, and three soldiers, and armed with four or five eight-pounder guns. In May 1779, it was resolved by the Ten that this new fort should be erected at once (if not built already) and that a gun should be placed on the point of Tiger Island, and another at Hamak Point, to give signals to the post whenever a negro should run away. It was further decided that a Bermudian bark should be bought, armed with two or three guns, and provided with a crew of eight to ten mulatto sailors, to cruise about the mouth of the Essequibo to prevent desertions and smuggling. This they would supply, provided it was maintained from the Colony Chest, to contribute to which the master of any runaway taken by the bark might be called upon to pay a hundred guilders, otherwise the negro would be sold by auction and the proceeds placed to the credit of the Colony Chest.

It appears that a great many desertions took place, on account of slaves being sent into the bush to cut troolies for thatching the houses. The Council of Policy passed several resolutions on this matter. In Demerara, all the troolie grounds below the Camouni Creek were reserved for the Company, who could grant licences to cut them, but only Indians were to be sent into the bush for this purpose, for fear of desertion. In May 1779, the condition of the buildings on Fort Island was considered, and it was resolved to roof them with wallaba shingles instead of troolies.

About this time the system of giving presents to Indians became more regular, and as slave desertions were common, every effort was made to procure their help in capturing the negroes. The Ten ordered that they should not be

taken as slaves, but be treated in every way as free persons, nevertheless a good number of Indians and plenty of "creoles" were still held in slavery.

Whenever a slave riot took place, a great deal of bad feeling was produced, and charges of cruelty or meanness were made by one master against another, or by the authorities. The expression of strong opinions as to the causes of a revolt, and the means of preventing future trouble, led to a great many quarrels. By this time compensation was given for slaves who were executed by order of the Court of Justice, as well as those sentenced to long terms of penal servitude in the chain gang. Captain SEVERYN protested in the Council, against the chain gang system in April 1778, at which the Directeur-General appears to have been offended, as he retaliated by severely censuring the Captain on the 21st of May, for his brutal treatment of the blacksmith and some other servants of the Company. This led to a number of disputes, which culminated at the meeting of November 10th, when SEVERYN quarrelled with the Secretary, and strongly protested against his (SEVERYN's) being prevented from speaking against a Resolution for the compensation for slaves executed under sentence of the Court of Justice. SEVERYN had already met the Directeur-General, and TROTZ charged the Captain with insulting him in his own house, giving him a blow, which he had returned, so that a fight had ensued. The Directeur-General insisted that SEVERYN should be arrested and sent to the Netherlands, while the Council were divided, but as the majority was against the Captain he was suspended and put under arrest, he and the meeting protesting all round, one against another, so that it almost ended in a free fight. The matter was referred to the Ten, who reinstated the Captain on the 18th of May following.

Disputes were frequent, especially on occasions where anything like a crowd was collected. On the 16th of Sep-

tember 1778, the Sexton of the Church at Fort Zeelandia asked the Council of Policy to make a resolution as to precedence at funerals, so that disturbances might be prevented. They decided that the procession should form in the following order, viz. the family of the deceased, the Directeur-General and Councillors, ex-Councillors according to seniority, the Predicant, Kiesheers and ex-Keisheers, Board of Orphans, Military Officers, Burgher Officers, First Clerk and Assistants, and finally, all others, in such order as might be previously decided at the house of the deceased. The following day the Council expressed their indignation at an offensive letter from six Burgher Officers, which they resolved to forward to the States General and the Ten. Even the Predicant, the Rev. J. LINGIUS, was reprimanded in July previous, for disobedience to the Council, and in November following he applied for a honourable discharge on the plea of ill-health. This was granted, and arrangements made for the Rev. TILBANUM to come from Demerara every two months to perform service, for which he was to be remunerated from the Church and Poor Fund.

Stringent regulations were made to prevent illicit trading, which it appears was still carried on to some extent. The manifests of all vessels were to be deposited at the Secretary's Office, and on these was to be declared what goods were to be sold. A list of passengers was also to be made out by the Captain, and, if these were going to settle in the colony, they were bound to take the oath of allegiance at once. After taking the oath, a stranger might be admitted to all the rights of citizenship on payment of a fee of five guilders. It was proposed that foreign vessels should pay five per cent duty on all imports and exports, but as the feeling against this was too strong they were allowed to remain on the same footing as those of the fatherland.

The Company imposed a Customs duty of two per cent on exports and imports to and from Essequibo and Demerara, this going by the name of *Recognitie*, besides which a half of one per cent was charged for convoy. The vessels were bound to proceed direct to the colony, and, if they broke bulk in a foreign port, were liable to a fine of three thousand guilders. The Captains were also obliged to take as many passengers as the ship could accommodate, such as soldiers, servants under engagement, with their wives and children, &c., providing them with food and drink on the voyage, for the paltry sum of thirty-six guilders a head, children under ten paying half, and babies being free. They were liable to a fine of £100 for taking any one without a pass, £600 for sailing without a manifest, £100 for taking a private letter, £600 for not giving ten days notice of departure, or leaving without the letter bag, while a bond for £7,000 was exacted, as security that none of the conditions should be violated.

All these stringent regulations met with continual protests, not only from the colonists but the Councils as well. Commandeur SCHUYLENBURG, in 1779, discharged Secretary ROETERINGH for ill-treating the clerks, which the Ten thought a very high-handed proceeding, reprimanding him severely, and declaring his action null and void. In 1777, BERNARD ALBINUS wrote a formal protest to the Commandeur and Council of Demerara, against the right of the Company to order the banishment of any servant, without trial or investigation, if he was thought dangerous to its interests. This having been forwarded to the Ten, they expressed their great dissatisfaction, and said they considered themselves the only judges of their own actions, ordering that in future no one should honour them with such demonstrations. On the 14th May 1778, it was resolved, that unless all their orders were executed immediately on arrival, the Commandeur should be fined six guilders for each day

they remained in abeyance, unless satisfactory reasons could be shown.

The regulations as to leaving the colony were very stringent. Debtors were required to give notice to their creditors, and were not permitted to depart without leaving sufficient property, not only for the satisfaction of those interested, but also the authorities.

A very important matter was decided by the Ten on the 3rd of May 1779, in answer to a question from Essequibo. The children of whites and slaves were not necessarily free, but they might obtain their freedom on application to that authority. About the same time it was decided that insane persons were not to be confined by the authorities, except on the request of their relations, and on payment for board and lodging.

The last few years had shown a steady increase in the official returns of exports. In 1779, twenty-four vessels arrived in both rivers, ten from Zeeland and fourteen from Holland, three of them being slave ships, and the produce exported amounted to 5,899 $\frac{1}{4}$ hhds. sugar, 927 barrels and 25,234 bags coffee, and 2,868 bales cotton. The year following the shipments of sugar and cotton were rather less, but coffee had increased to 1,437 brls. and 40,023 bags. There were then 129 plantations in Essequibo, of which nine were exempted from taxes under the regulation, while in Demerara there were about 200 estates, the greater number of new concessions being on the East Coast, and of course free. Great difficulty was experienced in collecting the taxes, while the returns for their assessment were habitually falsified. Being paid in produce, the Receiver had often to complain of the trash which was imposed upon him—the sweepings of the coffee logie, damaged cotton, and the nastiest sugar, being considered good enough to pay the head-tax. It was always a year, and a very large proportion of it, often two or three years in arrears. In

1780, the Council protested so strongly against the imposition of an acreage tax, that the Ten ordered the Directeur-General to collect it at once without further consultation with his Councillors, and prosecute those who did not pay. The events of 1781 however settled this question in favour of the planters.

In Demerara, on the 21st of January 1780, Councillor JOSEPH BOURDA called attention to the cost of boarding the Councillors during the session, which he considered too high. On the following day an offer was made by Mr. VERHUYS, to supply breakfast, dinner and supper, including wines, for both Councils, during their sessions, for the sum of f3,500 per annum, which was accepted. JOSEPH BOURDA was at this time senior Councillor, and when SCHUYLENBURG was sick in July following, acted as Commandeur *ad interim*.

Towards the latter part of 1780, rumours of an impending war with England put the colony in great fear, especially Demerara, where there were no defences for the coast and lower river estates. The matter was talked over at the dinner tables, and the Commandeur, who, as we know, owned a plantation, expressed his anxiety as to the results of a raid on the river by privateers. In conversation with JAMES CLARKE, a Barbadian, he said that it would be better for Demerara to be captured by a King's ship, than to be exposed to pillage. As we shall see later, this conversation was reported to the Governor of Barbados, with important results.

As early as January 1780, the condition of the Demerara Brandwagt was considered, and a battery projected on the eastern point of the entrance to the river. A little later it was thought desirable to strengthen the Brandwagt, but on examination of its site they found the mud too oozy to stand a heavy battery, and therefore a light one was projected. However, nothing was actually done, and the

defences remained in the same dilapidated condition. Two American privateers were in Demerara in the early part of 1781, and one Captain G. GRIMS was arrested there in September 1780.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BERBICE ASSOCIATION AND THE PLANTERS, 1768—1780.

Governor Sabloniere appointed—New taxes imposed—a “Planters’ Association” of the “Olden Time”—Its appeal to the States General—Enumeration of taxes—Income and expenditure of the colony—Decision of the States General—Berbice obtains a bad reputation—Sabloniere dies—Winter appointed, who dies before taking over the administration—Kaecks appointed, dies, and is succeeded by Koppiers—Project for new fortifications—Koppiers’ humanity.

THE successor to HOOGENHEIM as Governor of Berbice was STEPHAN HENDRIK DE LA SABLONIERE, who had been a Captain of Grenadiers, and was appointed on the 19th of March 1768. Not being a man of any particular ability, he could do hardly anything towards re-establishing the colony in its former position. Even with the most able and energetic Governor very little could have been done, as the Directors were unable to supply the necessary capital, and consequently the friction between the planters and the Government still continued. The forts were rebuilt after a fashion, and the posts re-occupied, but the expenses of proper fortifications were entirely beyond the means of the Association or the half-ruined colonists. A little Brandwagt was built opposite Fort St. Andries, from which signals could be made to the other side of the river, and this was the only new erection. In 1769, plans were made for two entirely new forts, to replace St. Andries and Nassau, but these were never carried out.

While the planters were agitating for freedom of taxes, the Directors, forgetting the recommendation of HOOGENHEIM, and the fact that settlers were wanted, abolished the

ten years' freedom on new concessions. It was publicly notified by the Governor and Council on the 9th of October 1770, that "the ten years' freedom, from taxes on land already granted but not transported, shall cease from this date, and these grants will in future be subject to all the taxes in force, or that may be at any time imposed." They would also have to pay ten guilders an acre before the transport was passed, and certain persons whose names were enumerated, were required to give notice within three months, whether they were willing to keep the land in their possession on those terms, as, if not, their plantations would be given to other parties. It does not appear that the planters took much notice of this, as it was repeated on the 1st of July following, with two months to send in their acceptance. The grantees, no doubt, took it as a breach of faith, and, as we shall see presently, combined to oppose all increase of taxation, although they wanted protection. They thought that either the Association or the State should do all that was required, and cared very little for anything beyond their own interests.

At this time, the whole colony was kept going by the advances from the States of Holland, of 50,000 guilders every six months, for which interest had been paid. After receiving the last instalment in 1772, the Directors hardly knew how to act, and when the interest became due the following year, they petitioned for its remission, or that the whole debt might be cancelled. To re-establish the colony, *f*786,354 had been contributed, while they had only received *f*134,815 in taxes, and the colony estates were not paying. They had hitherto always tried to pay the interest but now they were quite destitute of funds, and could hardly raise enough for the current expenses. Ultimately the States gave them an unlimited time to pay, which settled the matter, as no attempt was afterwards made to provide for either capital or interest.

The dispute as to the increase of taxes came to a crisis in 1774. A number of influential merchants of Amsterdam had estates in Berbice, and when the Directors wanted to impose additional taxes, petitions were sent to their High Mightinesses protesting against their being obliged to pay these, on the ground that they were against the provisions of the Charter. The shareholders had never paid up more than fifty per cent, and the planters claimed that the capital should all be subscribed before they were asked to contribute. The Directors in reply, stated that all the profits on the ten or eleven colony estates went to pay the expenses, while the private planters paid hardly anything.

From the documents* connected with this dispute, it appears that the estate owners and persons interested in Berbice, formed a Society to protect their interests, which met once a month in Amsterdam. It was governed by a Committee of four, one of whom in turn was President for three months, and two retired annually. The subscription was six guilders on signing the Articles, and a further contribution of ten stivers for each thousand pounds of produce received from Berbice. To prevent dinners, &c. at the Society's expense, it was provided that nothing but pipes and tobacco should be paid for from the funds. There were thirty-nine original members, and the meetings commenced on the 4th of April 1769. From this Society a number of petitions emanated, all being in opposition to the Berbice Association, in fact it may be considered as a rival and opponent to the proprietors in all their movements. A deputation was appointed to wait on the Directors, but as the two parties could not agree, the negotiations were soon broken off.

In 1774, PIETER PAMA and others drew up an elaborate Petition and Memorial, and forwarded it to the States

* Bequeste, Memorie, en Bylaagen voor Pieter Pama *cum suis*, Eigenaars van Plantagien gelegen in de Colonie Berbice, &c., &c., 1774.

General, in which their grievances were well stated. In obedience to the recommendations of their High Mightinesses, to renew their negotiations with the Directors as soon as possible, so as to get an estimate of the cost of the defences of the colony, the proportion which the planters would have to pay, and the manner in which it might be collected, they had applied to the Directors three times. At first they received no answer, but on the third application the Directors at last said they would give no reply in writing, but were willing to talk over the matter. Five deputies were then appointed, three of them being commissioned to attend the meetings of the Directors, but nothing came of this. Then the Society offered to place the matter in the hands of their lawyers, but the Directors refused, saying they wished to have nothing to do with lawyers. The petitioners then went on to say that they had done everything in their power to arrange matters, but all in vain, on account of the strange behaviour of the Directors, and now they addressed themselves to their High Mightinesses, praying them to prohibit the collection of the extraordinary tax of £125 for each plantation. They also asked that the Directors be commanded to communicate in writing to the suppliants, what measures they intended to take to protect Berbice, the cost thereof, and what part they expected to be contributed by the planters; also that the negotiations should take place in the presence of deputies nominated by their High Mightinesses.

The Memorial states, that the Directors were permitted by the Charter to exact an annual head-tax of fifty pounds of sugar from each inhabitant, black or white, a weigh-tax of two-and-a-half per cent on imports and exports, and a tonnage duty of three guilders per last on all vessels, both inwards and outwards. Besides these, they might impose an extraordinary head-tax for the fort at the mouth of the river, the cost of the Minister, &c., and moderate taxes

for supporting the government, &c. All these were permitted, and paid as follows:—

1. Head-tax of 50 lbs. sugar or 50 stivers for each adult, and 25 for each child, whether white or black.

2. Weigh-tax or Customs duty of $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on produce, calculating sugar at *f*40 per hhd., cacao 8 stivers per lb., coffee 5 stivers per lb., and cotton 6 stivers per lb.

3. Vendue tax on all public sales, the seller paying $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. to the colony, and the buyer 5 per cent. to the Vendue Master. Besides this they had to pay 2 stivers in the guilder for making out notice of the sale, and a portion of the *f*50 which was paid to the messenger who carried round the publication. When the vendue took place a drum was beaten at the fort, both morning and evening, as long as the sale lasted, for which the seller had to pay *f*2.10.

4. Tonnage duty of *f*3 per last (2 tons) on entry, and the same on clearing, besides 10 stivers on a hhd. of beer, an anker of wine, brandy or gin, or a case of spirits or wine of fifteen flasks, also 5 stivers for a landing certificate on each of these.

5. Stamp duty on all documents passed by the Governor and Council, such as transports, mortgages, &c. of *f*3; on wills and codicils *f*2, and on all petitions, summons, &c., 10 stivers.

6. Storage at the free man's store house (General Custom house, as distinguished from the Colony store) 10 per cent on the cost of freight.

7. Postage on each letter, according to size, either in Amsterdam or in the colony, 6, 12, 18 or 30 stivers.

8. Church money of one stiver per acre.

These taxes were enumerated to disprove the statement of the Directors, that the private planters contributed little or nothing to the revenue of the colony.

Many of the Berbice planters united in appointing certain merchants of Amsterdam as their attorneys, to carry on the opposition to new taxes and bring the matter before the States General. They stated that they wished to prevent the ruin and total loss of the colony, which had already been nearly destroyed by the revolt of the slaves. To prevent further deterioration, they were desirous of doing everything possible to re-establish Berbice, but they could not flatter themselves that this would be done unless their endeavours in that direction received the support of their

High Mightinesses. They therefore prayed that the present owners of estates, and those desirous of establishing new ones, be granted the same privileges as were allowed to former settlers, and that they should never be charged, or held liable, to defray the extraordinary expenses already incurred, or that might be connected with the preservation of the colony from a similar danger to that of the late rebellion. These great expenses being entirely beyond their means, they begged their High Mightinesses to make such further provisions as might be found necessary to put the colony in a safe condition, so that the plantations might thrive.

The principal conditions of the planters were that they should not be called upon to pay the debts of the Association, and that before incurring any expenses for which new taxes were to be imposed, they had the right to be consulted. Their questions to the Directors in 1768 were, first, what proportion of the cost of the expeditions must be paid by the planters? second, what would be the cost of the defences? and last, what measures were to be taken to keep the colony secure in future?

In reply, the Directors stated that the costs of the assistance from Surinam, St. Eustatius, &c., amounted to *f*393,471.4; and that they had negotiated a loan on which the interest amounted to *f*6,250, which with the cost of the Military establishment, *f*49,739.7, made the annual expenses *f*55,989.7. The income of the colony, after paying the ordinary expenses of administration, amounted to *f*15,834, so that there was a deficiency of *f*40,155.7. This they thought should be borne by the whole colony, and that taxes on produce would be the least oppressive. Beyond the deficiency above stated, *f*40,000 was required annually to pay off the debt by instalments, so that over eighty thousand guilders was wanted, while the value of the produce of the whole colony amounted to about *f*332,000.

They could not estimate the cost of fortifications, but thought they had better improve Fort Nassau, so as to be secure against internal enemies, rather than erect a strong fort at the mouth of the river, the expense of which the colony could not bear.

The Planters' Association (as it may be called) did not like their answer. To pay a produce tax of eighty thousand guilders annually would mean twenty-five per cent *ad valorem* duty, in addition to the two-and-a-half already paid. This, as they said, would simply ruin them, so they wrote again to the Directors, asking for fuller information, to which they received no reply. After a lot of petitions and counter-petitions, the States General at last decided on the 1st of April 1774, that the Directors should be permitted, for three years, to double the existing taxes, and impose another of f125 on each plantation, provided the total amount did not exceed f12,500. In consideration for this, they were bound to make provisions for the security of the colony, and always keep at least two hundred properly armed and equipped soldiers there, and further, to furnish the Planters' Association with a muster roll of the troops in Berbice every six months.

The matter was now settled for a time, but Berbice took a long period to recover herself. To prevent any reasonable cause for insurrection in future, the States General, in October 1764, ordered the Directors to take steps to prevent undue severity to the slaves, and also to increase the number of whites on the estates. In the fatherland, the cruel executions of the captured rebels had created a very bad impression, even the Stadtholder himself saying that he lamented their sad fate. Thus Berbice obtained a very bad reputation for cruelty, while the late epidemic gave it another character of being unhealthy, so that there was a difficulty in getting soldiers and sailors to go there. This even gave rise to the proverbial expressions "Hij is naar

de Berbiesjes " and " Loop naar de Berbiesjes " applied to a person " gone to the dogs " or irretrievably ruined.

Governor **SABLONIERE** died in 1773, and on the 16th of November of the same year, the Directors appointed **JOHAN CHRISTOFFEL DE WINTER** as his successor. This gentleman was at that time Captain Commandant of the troops in Essequibo, and being in that colony, was allowed to take his oath by proxy. His Commission was dated 23rd March 1774, but when it reached Essequibo he was very sick, and, dying on the 4th of July following, never assumed the Government, or was even able to visit Berbice. Meanwhile, the colony remained under the control of three members of the Council of Government.

Some difficulty was now experienced in getting a suitable person to fill the office, but **ISAAC KAECKS** was commissioned on the 15th of December, 1774, and departed from the Netherlands the following year, arriving in August, when he took over the Government from the three Councillors, who received presents of seven hundred guilders each, for their two years services.

As a result of the agitation of the planters, a Publication was made on December 12th 1774, that the grantees of new land should have the option of paying the ten guilders per acre in ten annual instalments, the Directors holding a preferent claim for the amount unpaid. This was ordered to be sent round to the different divisions, after being published by beat of drum in the presence of two Councillors.

KAECKS died in December 1777, and again the colony was administered by three of the Councillors until his successor was appointed.

On the 19th of June 1778, **PIETER HENDRIK KOPPIES** was chosen Governor, and in October following he took over the government, when the three Councillors were presented with £1,200. and the Secretary and Fiscal with £525. Like most of his predecessors, he received a grant of five

hundred acres of land, so that, as in Demerara and Essequibo, the chief was also a planter. KOPPIERS was an energetic young man, and soon made his influence felt. He made a careful inspection of the fortifications, which he found very imperfect, they being in an unfinished state for want of funds. The garrison consisted of two hundred men, who were hardly sufficient to properly man the different forts and posts. To put matters right, the engineer, J. C. W. HERLIN, was sent out, with orders to complete the forts in six years. He arrived in Berbice on the 28th of March 1780, and immediately set to work, but found it impossible to carry out the plans for want of money and labour. Having made new plans, which included especially the completion of Fort St. Andries, he was directed to proceed accordingly, but before he had hardly commenced the work, the colony was captured by the English.

KOPPIERS saw the necessity for coming down the river, and no doubt had noticed the wonderful development of Demerara during the last few years. He tried his best to put the colony in good order, and especially, made regulations for the government of the slaves. His ideas were humane; while being desirous of keeping the negroes under subordination, he wished at the same time to protect them from tyranny and cruel treatment. On the 12th of July 1780, he sent a letter to the Directors, calling their attention to the fact that murdering a slave was only punished by a fine of £500, while any runaway could be killed as an outlaw; these things had quite shocked him. Nothing however was done for several years on account of the events which followed.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE "THREE RIVERS" CAPTURED BY THE BRITISH, 1781.

War with Great Britain—Capture of St. Eustatius—Four English privateers arrive in Demerara and compel its surrender—News sent to Essequibo—Arrival of two Men-of-war from Barbados—Letter from Governor Cunningham—Demerara capitulates to H. M. Ships—Commissioners sent to Essequibo to demand its surrender—Delegates sent to St. Eustatius to arrange terms with Admiral Rodney—Successful negotiations—Thanked on their return—Captain Thompson assumes supreme control—Oath of allegiance objected to—Essequibo comes to terms during the absence of the delegates—Lieut.-Col. Kingston's queries and answers—Soldiers ordered to leave if they would not enter the British service—Further disputes as to oath—Captain Thompson's unpopularity—Spanish raids—Projects for improving Demerara—Want of funds—Fort St. George—The oath again—Arrival of Kingston as Governor—His speech—Reply of Council—Oath settled to the general satisfaction—Answer of Demerara to complaints of Essequibo—Proposed Government Buildings and new town—Want of funds—Revenue of colony—Roads and bridges—Regulations for the entry of vessels—Idlers ordered to work or leave Demerara—Jail wanted, torture not allowed—Manumission tax Governor's salary—General satisfaction with Kingston—an English clergyman in Demerara.

DURING the war with the American Colonies, England had reason to complain that the Dutch settlements in the West Indies were used as depôts, to supply the enemy with provisions and contraband of war. This led to a manifesto and declaration of war on the part of England, on the 20th of December 1780, in which the Dutch were charged with giving secret assistance to both France and the revolted colonies, with protecting the enemies' privateers in general and the American pirate, PAUL JONES, in particular, and especially, with making a secret treaty

with the Americans. At the same time, Letters of Marque were issued against the Dutch, and some of their vessels which lay in British ports ordered to be detained.

The answer of the States General was formulated on the 10th of March 1781. They said that "if ever the annals of the world have furnished an instance of a free and independent state being attacked by an enemy, in the most unjustifiable manner, and without the least appearance of right or equity, by a neighbouring power allied for a long time, and bound by ties founded on the basis of common interest, it is without doubt the Republic of the United Netherlands, which finds itself in that case with His Majesty the king of Great Britain and his Ministers." From the beginning of the disputes they claimed to have adhered to the most exact neutrality, prohibiting the exportation of warlike stores to the British colonies in America, and taking such steps as greatly circumscribed their own trade and navigation. They had sent the most exact orders to all their colonies and settlements, as well as to their ships of war, to abstain from doing, in regard to the American flag, anything from which it might be inferred that they acknowledged the independency of the said colonies. When they had received a memorial from the British Ambassador, full of complaints against the governor of St. Eustatius, they had condescended to deliberate on it, although it was couched in terms little consonant with the regard due from one power to another, and recalled the Governor, when he cleared himself from the charges in a Court of Justice, the proceedings of which were transmitted to His Majesty's Minister. The remainder of the answer explains in a satisfactory manner (apparently) the other shady transactions charged against them, however, there appears to be no doubt that an illicit trade was done by the Dutch colonies, either with or without the consent of the Government,

As we have seen in the last chapter, orders were sent to Essequibo and Demerara, prohibiting the honouring of the American flag and the supply of contraband of war, but notwithstanding these, in the beginning of the year 1791, there was actually an American privateer in the River Demerara.

Admiral RODNEY was in the West Indies when the news of the declaration of war was brought, and was so prompt in his movements, that he appeared before St. Eustatius on the 3rd of February, with a strong fleet, and a great military force under the command of General VAUGHAN. The Dutch Governor, knowing nothing of the declaration of war, could scarcely comprehend the meaning of the officer who went ashore to demand the surrender of the island, and, being utterly unable to cope with such a force, was compelled to give up the place. Having for some time previous, considered this island as a nest of contrabandists, RODNEY confiscated all the properties of the inhabitants, and ordered them to quit the island. The harbour was full of vessels, there being about two hundred and fifty of all sizes, many of them loaded, while the stores were filled with goods estimated to be worth three million pounds.

The people were quite astonished when they found that RODNEY was treating them in this extraordinary manner. Such a thing had never been heard of before, and the Jews of the island petitioned strongly against the deportation and loss of their goods. It was with anguish that they approached their Excellencies, and with the utmost concern that they had received the afflicting order to give up the keys of their stores, together with inventories of their goods, household furniture and plate, and to prepare themselves to quit the island, leaving their beloved wives and helpless children behind them, and their goods liable to confiscation. Such unexpected orders from British Commanders, whose

principal characteristics were mercy and humanity, had produced the most horrid and melancholy scenes of distress that ever British eyes beheld, for numbers of families were now helpless, disconsolate, and in an absolute state of indigence and despair.

This appeal had no effect however, the Admiral being determined to execute his project of totally rooting out this nest of smugglers, even against the protests of some of his officers. Bales of goods were sold by auction—in many cases without inspection of the contents—the merchants from Barbados and other English islands, crowding to St. Eustatius to pick up bargains, which in some cases were almost fortunes, as the number of buyers was small in proportion to the immense quantity of goods.

A number of English privateers then in the West Indies, hearing of the declaration of war, and the capture of St. Eustatius, proceeded to the coast of Guiana, where they were successful in capturing several Dutch vessels before the colonies even knew of the commencement of hostilities. Four of them, belonging to Bristol, arrived in Demerara about the 21st of February, and seized all the vessels in the lower part of the river, thus stopping communication, and occasioning so much alarm, that most of the planters sent their wives, children, slaves, and portable effects, into the bush. Every boat was captured, so that the news should not be carried up the river, which caused the anxiety to be all the greater.

An extraordinary meeting of the Council of Policy was called on the 22nd, at which some of the members were unable to attend because of the blockade. The Commandeur reported that three privateers had captured some vessels in the river, and asked the Council to deliberate on the means of defence. Many suggestions were made, but on account of the state of affairs nothing was done, as even the Militia could not be collected.

On the 23rd the following letter was received by the Commandeur :—

" We the undersigned, being Commanders of four cruisers, and being now at war with the States General, intend to cruise here until the arrival of more ships of war and two thousand troops, which we hourly expect, and it is then our intention to enter both rivers.

" We have the pleasure to acquaint you that St. Eustatius is now under the English flag, and that there are five ships gone against Surinam.

" On board the Rodney at sea.

(Signed) WM. MACLURE, ROBT. BOREAL, FIL. HARDY,
BENJ. WENBOLD.

To the Hon. P. VAN SCHUYLENBURG, Commandant, and Council, &c.

Next morning, an officer arrived under a flag of truce, who, on being admitted to the Council, stated that the vessels were English privateers come to demand the surrender of the river. Before coming to any decision, it was resolved to send Councillors JOSEPH BOURDA, JOHN HASLIN, and THOMAS CUMING, to accompany the officer, and enquire of the Commander of the privateers, first, "Where they came from?" second, "Who they were?" and last, "For what reasons and in whose name they acted in such a hostile manner?" The deputation having gone on board and made these enquiries, returned with the answer, that the privateers were commissioned by Admiral Lord RODNEY, and if the river was not surrendered within two hours, they would commence hostilities and take what they wanted by force. After deliberation it was decided that nothing could be done to defend the river, and they could therefore only strike the flag and surrender. This having been communicated to the enemy, they took possession of all the vessels* and plundered some of the plantations, but like others of the same class, made no attempt to interfere with the Government. At a meeting of the Council on the 25th, it was

* Fifteen vessels were captured in Demerara and eight in Berbice.

resolved to send news of this calamity to Berbice and to erect some fortifications as soon as possible, including more especially a battery on Plantation *Eve Leary*.

The news was sent to Essequibo on the 24th, and on the following day an extraordinary meeting of the Council was called. The Directeur-General stated that a very unhappy circumstance had taken place, war had been declared by Great Britain, and it had resulted that two three-masted ships, a brig, and two schooners, of the enemy, had been observed cruising at the mouth of the river. He had received news of the surrender of Demerara, and Commandeur SCHUYLENBURG had written saying "I beg you not to attempt sending any assistance, as you will require help yourself." It was decided to thank SCHUYLENBURG for his information, and as for Essequibo, it could not be defended, Fort Zeelandia not being in a fit state to be of any use, while even if the enemy could be delayed by the fort this would not protect the river. Captain SEVERYN, the Commandant of the Fort, was then authorised to fire a blank shot, in case the vessels should appear before the fort, and if they took no notice and did not anchor, then to fire with ball. In case the enemy should attack the fort, he was authorised to hoist the white flag, and beat the drum as a signal of surrender, and if they did not then cease firing, to lower the flag altogether. The Secretary and Lieutenant of Militia, were then to go on board under a flag of truce, ask what were the enemy's intentions, and report to the Council. It was then suggested that the books should be hidden in some place of security, but as no suitable locality could be found, it was decided to let them remain where they were.

By the arrival in Demerara of H.M.S. *Surprise* and *Barbuda* on the 27th, a new aspect was given to the state of affairs. The following letter was brought from the Governor of Barbados, addressed to SCHUYLENBURG:—

Sir,—Having received information from Mr. CLARK, who lately arrived from Demerara, that upon the supposition that hostilities were likely to commence between Great Britain and the States General of the United Provinces, Your Excellency was apprehensive that the settlement under your government, might possibly fall a prey to privateers, as you were in no condition to resist, and that, to avoid the consequences of their irregularity, you are willing to surrender to one of H.M. Ships-of-war; I therefore, to comply with your wishes, have sent Lieutenant FORREST, an Officer of the 90th Regiment, with a flag of truce, which flag the Commander of the King's ship will convey to you, and afford you an opportunity of surrendering the Government under your command to the King of Great Britain, which will entitle you to the same terms as those granted by Sir GEORGE BRIDGES RODNEY and General VAUGHAN, to St. Eustatius, Saba and St. Martins.

Captain PENDER of H.M.S. *Barbuda*, I flatter myself, will be able to accomplish this object, who will acquaint me with your Resolution, when a proper force shall be sent to keep possession for the King my Master.

I have the honour, &c.,

JAS. CUNNINGHAM.

This was accompanied by the following:—

Barbuda, off the Demerara River,

February 27th, 1781.

Sir,—With this you will receive a letter from His Excellency General CUNNINGHAM: I am to add, that since my leaving Barbados, I have been joined by H.M.S. *Surprise*, and to request that Your Excellency's answer may be addressed jointly to Captain DAY and myself.

I have, &c.,

FRANCIS PENDER.

Surprise, off the Demerara River,

February 27th, 1781.

Sir,—In pursuance to the orders of Sir G. B. RODNEY, Bart., Knight of the Bath, Admiral of the White, and Commander-in-Chief of H.M. ships and vessels employed in these seas, to us directed; We the Captains of H.B.M.S. the *Surprise* and *Barbuda*, were ordered on this Coast, to attack, seize and destroy all ships and vessels belonging to the States General of the United Provinces, or their subjects, and finding at our arrival off here, that the privateers, from your defenceless situation, have taken most of the ships, &c., out of the two rivers Demerara and Essequibo, we are to request that no more are given up to them, but that the remainder be put in our possession, with your garrison and troops, and free entrance for His Majesty's ships up the river, and we

will take upon us to answer that no privateers shall land, molest, or disturb, the unarmed people of your country, and, will as far as in our power, give you the same terms as those granted to St. Eustatius. Lieutenant WILLIAMS of 'H.M.S. *Surprise*, is charged with these despatches, and will bring us your answer, which we shall expect as soon as possible.

We have, &c.,

GEO. DAY, FRANCIS PENDER.

These letters having been considered, it was resolved to surrender on the same terms as St. Eustatius, although the Council did not know what these were, and expressed their dissatisfaction at being obliged to capitulate under such vague conditions.

The reply of the Commandeur and Council was as follows :—

Gentlemen,—We have this moment received the honour of your letter relative to a proposal for rendering ourselves under the protection of His Majesty the King of Great Britain. The condition we are in, and the ill-treatment we suffer already from the private ships of war at present in this river, make us happy to embrace such an offer upon the same terms as granted to St. Eustatius, which we suppose to be, to leave the Government in full liberty of its rights, the inhabitants in quiet possession of their estates, and, with regard to the Military, to suffer them to depart with the honours of war. We therefore reiterate, that we give ourselves up under the protection of his aforesaid Majesty, and do wish that all the ships that have been carried out, may be ordered to be returned into this river, to be disposed of by you, gentlemen, as may be thought proper afterwards, especially as none of these Commanders of private ships of war have thought it convenient to show their Commissions, although requested thereto.

We shall conclude the present by begging your consideration, that while the constitution of our settlement is of a different nature with that of St. Eustatius, that no difficulty will be made to grant us some softer terms.

We have, &c.,

Commandeur and Councillors of Demerara.

The following day, the Secretary was sent on board, who, on his return, reported that Captains DAY and PENDER had no direct orders or power to make terms, but that a vessel would be sent to Lord RODNEY as soon as possible to learn his pleasure. Meanwhile, the two Captains appeared

in the Council on the 2nd of March, and formally declared that they took possession of the River Demerara in the name of the King of Great Britain.

On the 28th of February the Directeur-General called a meeting of the Council of Essequibo, when he read a letter from Captains DAY and PENDER, which had just been brought by Lieutenant WILLIAMS. This was similar to that to the Commandeur of Demerara, demanding the surrender of Essequibo and requiring an immediate answer. They insisted that all vessels then in the river should be at once put in their possession, and that on no pretence should they be wilfully run ashore, destroyed, unloaded, or in any way injured, or allowed to sail. The Directeur-General reported that he had just received the letter under a flag of truce, after which Lieutenant WILLIAMS was called in, and asked for further information as to the conditions granted to St. Eustatius, who in reply said that these were not yet known. On deliberation, they thought it very hard to give up on conditions of which they knew nothing, but as they were unable to defend the river they could not refuse, while they would have to trust that Great Britain would treat them honourably.

On the 3rd of March the Directeur-General reported that a large and a small vessel were already in front of the plantation of Mr. VAN RODEN, and they expected to arrive at the fort by the next flood tide. In case they should come up during the night, the Secretary was directed to proceed on board under a flag of truce, and enquire their business. A little later the Secretary went on board and returned with Lieutenant WILLIAMS, who handed in the following letter :—

Sir,—We have the honour of your letter by Lieutenant WILLIAMS, and have, agreeable to your requisition, sent you a force equal to secure yourself and the people in the Government of Essequibo, from every danger and insult, and we have given Lieutenant WILLIAMS necessary orders for his proceedings. There not being sufficient water for His Majesty's ships to pass

the bar of Essequibo, was the reason why we sent Lieutenant WILLIAMS. The *Surprise* will go into Demerara river to-morrow, and the *Barbuda* will sail to join Sir GEORGE RODNEY, to request a force to be sent immediately for your further protection. We feel much distressed that we cannot reply to your Excellency's letter so fully as we could wish, not being acquainted with the Dutch language, and we have to request that your answer to our letter of the 28th of February may be sent us in English, as we unfortunately have no interpreter.

We have, &c.,

Geo. DAY, FRANCIS PENDER.

On being asked what was to be done, Lieutenant WILLIAMS said that everything must remain on the same footing until further orders, with the flags flying; he would however take possession of the ships in the river, lower their flags, and hoist that of His Britannic Majesty. He then tendered the preliminary Articles of Capitulation which were finally agreed to as follows:—

Preliminary Articles of Agreement, between JOHN WILLIAMS, Esquire, as having Commission from GEORGE DAY, Esquire and FRANCIS PENDER, Esquire, Commanders of His Majesty the King of Great Britain's ships of war the *Surprise* and *Barbuda*, in this river of Essequibo, and WILLIAM McCLURE, Esquire, for taking possession of the same, on one side,

and

The Honourable Director General and Councillors of the said river of Essequibo on the other side.

1. It is agreed that the Fort Zeelandia, with its garrison, shall be left in the same manner and state in which it is now, under the Dutch colours, until more particular disposals of the said GEORGE DAY, Esquire and FRANCIS PENDER, Esquire, or one of them, may be made, except that the Powder Magazine shall be sealed by the seal of the said JOHN WILLIAMS, Esquire, in Commission, and by that of the West India Company.

2. That the Company's stores shall be left undisturbed and under the same supervision as they are at present.

3. That the eight Dutch trading ships lying here in this river at their anchors, be immediately put into the possession of the said JOHN WILLIAMS, Esquire, their colours to be struck, and no others to be hoisted.

4. That the seamen of those Dutch ships, committing any misdeeds, shall provisionally be put into the hands of the Magistrates of this place and river.

5. With respect to all ceremonies, these shall be agreed upon by more particular regulations.

6. And, that in the last place, all the inhabitants may go and return, to and from all places in this river, with their small boats and crafts, wherever they are called by their own particular interests.

This agreed and regulated this 3rd of March, 1781.

G. H. TROTZ

JOHN WILLIAMS

T. C. SEVERYN, &c., &c.

WM. McCLEURE.

On the same day, in Demerara, the two English Captains informed the Commandeur and Council that the *Barbuda* was to be sent to St. Eustatius, to report the surrender of the two rivers, and it was agreed that JOSEPH BOURDA and JOHN HASLIN should be delegated to proceed to Lord RODNEY, and arrange the Articles of Capitulation. This decision was made on the evening of the 3rd, and there being no opportunity of consulting the Directeur-General, the delegates took upon themselves the responsibility of acting for both rivers.

BOURDA and HASLIN were provided with the following Commission :—

These are to certify to all Governors and Commanders-in-Chief of His Britannic Majesty's Service :

We the Commandore and Council of Demerary have appointed J. BOURDA, Esq., Member of Council in this River, and J. HASLIN, Esq., a principal inhabitant of this colony ; desire all such Governors and Commanders to assist and protect the same gentlemen in everything what they may require.

Demerary. 3rd March, 1781.

Leaving Borsselen Island the same night, they embarked on board the *Barbuda*, which lay near the mouth of the river, at daylight on the 4th, when the anchor was weighed immediately. They arrived at St. Eustatius on the evening of the 12th, and the following morning went on board the Admiral's ship the *Sandwich*, where they were kindly received by Lord RODNEY. After putting a number of questions, and inspecting a chart of the River Demerara, the Admiral expressed great satisfaction at the acquisition of the place, and said he thought it would be of great consequence to both Great Britain and the Caribee Islands. General

VAUGHAN having arrived, the delegates were invited to dine on board, after which a friendly conversation took place, when the General and Admiral discussed the necessity for sending more troops to protect the two rivers against the French. The General thought it desirable to send some one to report, before going to the expense of providing a strong garrison, as he thought that a young colony ought not to be put to any very great expense.

The following day they were invited to take up their quarters on board the Admiral's ship, where BOURDA rendered himself useful by acting as French interpreter. Later, the Articles of Capitulation were discussed and ultimately signed, as follows :—

By Sir GEORGE RODNEY, Baronet, Knight of the Bath, Admiral of the White, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's ships and vessels employed at Barbados, the Leeward Islands, and seas adjacent,
And by the Honourable General JOHN VAUGHAN, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's land forces employed in the West Indies, &c., &c., &c.

Whereas the inhabitants of Demerary and the River Essequibo and dependencies, have surrendered at discretion to the arms of His Britannic Majesty, it is hereby granted to the inhabitants to remain in full possession of their property, and to be governed by their present laws, until His Majesty's pleasure be known.

All the property, stores, &c., belonging to the Dutch West India Company, to be delivered up to His Britannic Majesty's Officers.

The inhabitants to take the Oath of Allegiance to, and be admitted under, the protection of the Crown of Great Britain, and will be allowed to export their produce to Great Britain and the British islands of Tobago and Barbados, in British bottoms, and be treated in all respects as British subjects till His Majesty's pleasure be known.

The Commandant and other Officers have leave to go to Holland in a Cartel, taking with them all their effects, of whatever nature, the troops to have the same indulgence.

Given under our hands at St. Eustatius this 14th day of March, 1781.

GEO. BRIDGES RODNEY, JOHN VAUGHAN.

BOURDA tried his best to preserve the possessions of the Company from confiscation, but these were considered as being in the same position as if belonging to the Dutch

Government, and not on the footing of private property. In a later conversation the General told BOURDA he was sending Colonel KINGSTON to inspect Demerara and Essequibo, who would see what could be done to protect the two rivers. The delegates asked that the Oath of Allegiance should be modified, so that it be only stipulated that the colonists should not take up arms against His Britannic Majesty, and that they be allowed to ship to all the possessions of Great Britain. The Admiral said that no alteration of the Oath would be permitted, but a few months grace might be allowed, when, those who refused would have to quit the colony, and as to the trade, he believed that it had been prohibited to some places, but perhaps a little more latitude might be allowed. In answer to the Admiral's questions, BOURDA told him that Demerara and Essequibo yielded annually about eight to ten thousand hogsheads of sugar, a proportionate quantity of rum, five or six million pounds of coffee, and seven or eight hundred thousand pounds of cotton, while cocoa and indigo had been commenced, but were not yet of importance. The Admiral asked if they had any grievance against the present government that required redress, and advised them not to overlook any tyrannical or unjust measures, but give him information, that these might be rectified at once. BOURDA told him that they were satisfied at present, and would not neglect giving him notice when they had any grievances.

During their few days at St. Eustatius, BOURDA and HASLIN went to see some of the inhabitants, a few of whom were possessors of estates in Demerara. They found them very much distressed at the position of affairs, the Island being utterly ruined. They also had a look at the auction sales, which were still being carried on, where they were surprised to see large packages broken open and sold in the most hurried manner, without the purchaser being

able to have more than a confused notion of the contents. BOURDA said that he wanted to make some purchases for himself, but could not do so on account of being ordered to prepare for his return.

They left St. Eustatius on the 15th, in the *Hyæna*, Captain THOMPSON, and arrived in Demerara on the 5th of April, where the whole river was informed of the Articles of Capitulation on the 9th. The Commandeur and Councillors said that they could not find language strong enough to thank Messrs. BOURDA and HASLIN, and expressed their approval of everything that had been done. Councillors RADEMAKER and SWAN, who had protested against the commission having departed without their knowledge and consent, now grumblingly withdrew their protest, while the inhabitants, when they heard of the state of St. Eustatius, were much relieved that the terms of the two rivers were *not* the same.

Captain EDWARD THOMPSON now took over the command of both rivers, while Lieutenant-Colonel KINGSTON, who had arrived at the same time, commenced his enquiries as to the resources of the colony. KINGSTON made himself so agreeable, that it was suggested that Admiral RODNEY be asked to appoint him as Governor, a petition to this effect being quietly drawn up, so as not to offend Captain THOMPSON. The following "Notice" was published by Captain THOMPSON and the Commandeur and Councillors on the 9th of April :—

" In consequence of the war, this river having been taken possession of by His Majesty's ships, the Commandeur and Councillors resolved, with approbation of several of the inhabitants, to commit the gentlemen J. BOURDA and J. HASLIN, to go to Admiral RODNEY and General VAUGHAN, to entreat them to grant this colony such terms of capitulation as this Court had given them in writing, at least as far as their Excellencies would grant the same. In consequence thereof the said gentlemen obtained the following Capitulation : *

* See above.

"Which Capitulation, having been communicated to several of the principal inhabitants, and no material opposition having been made, the same has been ratified and confirmed by the said Commodore THOMPSON and the Commandeur and Councillors of Demerara.

"And it is further enacted and resolved, that the inhabitants of this river shall not be obliged to take the Oath of Allegiance within six months from the date of this present; further, that in consequence of the aforementioned Capitulation, the Commandeur and Councillors shall remain in the full possession of the Administration of the Policy and Justice of this colony, in which Assemblies the said Commodore THOMPSON shall have the precedence, if he shall require it, in order to be informed of the business of the colony."

During the absence of the Commissioners little had been done in Demerara. Captain DAY, hearing that two American vessels were in the Upper Demerara, spoke strongly against the Commandeur for permitting them to come there, threatening to report the matter to Admiral RODNEY, which made the Council very uncomfortable, although they excused themselves in the best way they could.

In Essequibo, on the 6th of March, the Directeur General complained, that the ship *Plantershulp* was being taken away from her anchorage while the flag was still flying at Zeelandia. The Council was very much annoyed at this, which they considered as an insult to the Dutch Republic, and resolved at first not to hoist the flag again, but, getting a little cooler, they decided that it must be kept flying in accordance with the conditions. Next morning Captain DAY arrived at Fort Zeelandia, and ordered the flag to be lowered, and the Fort and Brandwagt to be put in possession of His Majesty. After some discussion the following terms were agreed to:—

1. To strike the flag, for which Captain DAY will give an acknowledgment.
2. That the Military shall be allowed to march out with honours, retaining their arms and equipage, and one cannon.
3. The Military shall be quartered in the Brickery, and perform ordinary service under the orders of their Commanders, and in case of internal disturbance, be used under the orders of British Commanders.

4. For the above purpose they shall be equipped by the British Commanders.

5. The Religion of the inhabitants shall not be interfered with.

6. The Government shall remain under the Directeur-General and Councillors, the books and papers not being taken away, but kept in safety.

7. All high and low officials shall remain under the regular government.

8. That the stores shall remain as before and be carried on as usual, only arms being given up.

9. That no colonist be injured in person or property, and their boats be allowed to go where necessary, without hindrance.

10. But, all the inhabitants, before leaving the colony must obtain passes, and show them to the English Commander.

11. In consideration of these, His Britannic Majesty shall protect these rivers against all pirates and robbers, and other interference.

12. All criminals who may come into the hands of Justice, shall remain in detention, but not be punished, pending further instructions from Lord Rodney.

On the 13th of April Captains THOMPSON and DAY arrived in Essequibo, bringing a copy of the Articles of Capitulation, which did not altogether please the Directeur-General, especially that which referred to the confiscation of the Company's estates. The Council tried to modify this, but the two Captains said they could not make any alterations, as the war had arisen through the action of the Amsterdam merchants, some of whom were shareholders of the Company. After making some formal protests, the Articles were agreed to, and Captain THOMPSON reserved his right to a seat in the Council. Commander SCHUYLENBURG and Mr. HASLIN, who had also arrived, were admitted into the Council and thanked for the Commission to St. Eustatius and other arrangements, HASLIN being asked to convey their acknowledgments to Councillor BOURDA; it was also decided to thank Admiral RODNEY for the liberal terms of the capitulation.

The following letter was read at the above meeting, and the questions answered the following day:—

Demerara, April 10th, 1781.

Sir,—His Excellency General VAUGHAN having honoured me with his commands, to see into the state of your colony, and make report to him, I must

beg the favour of you to obtain for me from the Public Officers of the different departments, full information of the civil and military concerns of your colony, that I may lay them before His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in the West Indies.

The material points of civil business may take some time to prepare and authenticate, in the mean time I must ask, in the name of the General, for all Colours and Military Trophies, with an account of the prisoners of war, distinguishing the different ranks of the Officers, and the number of non-commissioned officers and private soldiers.

I must also desire an attested account of all the artillery, arms, ammunition, and military stores, of every denomination on shore, including materials for making batteries, forts, or barracks, and all slaves, or cattle belonging to the establishment of Essequibo.

I have, &c.,

Br. KINGSTON,

Lieutenant-Colonel 86th or Rutland Regiment.

To the Honourable Governor TROTZ.

Lieutenant-Colonel KINGSTON presents his best compliments to Governor TROTZ, and has enclosed him some of the material points laid before the Council of Demerara yesterday; as many of them may be equally necessary for the colony of Essequibo, they are sent for the Governor's consideration.

1. What defensive works are necessary, the cost of them, how they might be paid for, the number of soldiers wanted for the defence, and what has been the usual garrison?

Answer: The Council request the Lieutenant-Colonel to make a personal inspection of the river, and see what will be required; the garrison has been one hundred, including officers.

2. What accommodation exists, such as quarters, hospitals, &c., for the troops?

Answer: Sufficient accommodation for the troops in the fort; the hospital wants repairs.

3. Can any force be raised in the colony for its defence, if so what force, and how is it paid?

Answer: No.

4. What is the annual revenue from duties or taxes; what is the income of the estates of the Company and the stock of slaves, cattle, craft, &c., on each: how are the rents collected, and what is paid to the attorney or receiver?

Answer: The Company exacts £2.10 for each slave; in the river are eight thousand, including those of the Company. In Europe the Company receives two and a half per cent, on goods shipped, but here it draws £8 per last on foreign ships, £1 recognition on each hogshead of rum and £2 per hogshead

for molasses, also a low duty on the exportation of wood by the piece : further, two per cent Vendue tax, of which half is used for the fortifications and the remainder given to the Vendue Master. We cannot give the yearly produce of the colony, but the inventory or account will be laid over. What the Administrator receives is not known, but the Receiver gets five per cent of the receipts.

5. Of the annual expenses of the colony, how much is expended for public officers, exigencies of Government, and other benefits to colony ?

Answer : The salaries of all high and low officers are almost £20,000, or about £2,000, also, each officer and servant has a house, slaves and boats, according to his position.

6. What is the average amount of the exports, for any given number of years ; what do the chief articles consist of, and what are the most desirable imports for profit or convenience ?

Answer : This cannot be controlled in this river, as the inhabitants ship a great deal to Demerary, the principal are sugar, coffee and cotton, the most profitable to introduce are slaves, horses, mules, materials and tools, and especially meat and drink for whites and slaves, and clothing for all.

7. Is the commerce of the colony choked by any present laws, or by restrictions of the Company, so much as to make redress necessary ?

Answer : No.

8. What is the civil establishment, and how are the public officers paid ? How is the Council constituted, by election, by Governor, or have any gentlemen seats by virtue of the offices they hold ?

Answer : The civil establishment consists of a Directeur-General, Commissary of train and vivres, Fiscal, Vendue Master, Receiver, Secretary and Bookkeeper, Predicant, First Clerk of Secretary and six Assistants, Surgeon Major, and a few trades people, all paid from the Company's Chest in assignats twice yearly. The Council consists of the four first mentioned officers appointed by the Company, and with these, to form the assembly, are joined four of the principal inhabitants, nominated by the College of Kieseheers.

9. Up to what time are duties and other portions of the public revenues paid, and are they remitted in specie or produce ?

Answer : The taxes are paid yearly in either drafts or produce, and remitted by the first opportunity.

10. What proportion of the salaries of public officers remain unpaid at the present time ?

Answer : Four months wages are due since last year.

11. What arrears of taxes are due, and from what time ?

Answer : The Receiver of Demerara can give this information, as he acted for the one here, who is dead.

12. It must be observed that the Crown of England must be accounted with for all arrears now remaining uncollected, in the same manner as these would be claimed by the States General or the West India Company.

Answer : This will be taken under consideration.

13. In Jamaica there is a handsome allowance to the officers and soldiers stationed there for the defence of the Island : Does this colony make any similar allowance, and if so, what does it amount to in hard dollars to the different ranks ?

Answer : The troops have always been paid from the Company's Chest ; they draw monthly as follows :—Captain Commandant \$32, Lieutenant \$16, Ensign \$14, Adjutant \$9 60, Sergeant \$4 80, Corporal \$3 60, Gunner \$3 20. Besides this they get rations of meat, flour, barley, salt, oil, vinegar, and kiltum.

The merchant vessels that had been taken by the privateers,* were now in possession of the King's Officers, and were wanted for the purpose of shipping produce, but as the sailors had all fled, there was a difficulty in procuring seamen to work them. On the 7th of April, a Proclamation was issued, offering a bounty of £5 to old seamen and £2 10 for ordinary men, belonging to neutral powers, if they would enter on board His Majesty's ships. Two days later it was notified that several of the Dutch ships would be ready to take in cargo, and, for that purpose, would lie off the estates of MESSRS. VAN HELSDINGEN, SANTHEUVAL and SAFFON, (*Ruimveld, Houston and Le Repentir*) to load sugar, coffee and cotton, after which they would go to Barbados under convoy of Commodore THOMPSON, and from thence to London. The vessels were to be loaded by the last of June, and the freights would be, for sugar 7s. 6d. and coffee 9s. per hundred pounds, while cotton was 2½d. per pound.

The Dutch soldiers in both rivers were given the option of entering the service of His Majesty, or leaving the colony in a cartel, but most of them chose the first alternative. Captain SEVERBYN was allowed to remain on parole,

* On account of the privateers acting without proper Commissions the captured vessels were confiscated to the Admiralty, so that neither they nor the King's ships obtained any prize money.

as Commissary of the Stores, but he seems to have been very dissatisfied with the state of affairs, and, being rather hot tempered, protested on several occasions. On the 25th of May Captain NICHOLAS INGRAM wrote to the Council as follows:—

“In consequence of orders from EDWARD THOMPSON, all officers and soldiers in the service of the West India Company, must embark directly on board the *Star* for their passage to the cartel intended for Holland. All who do not wish to go must immediately take the oath of allegiance. Any inhabitants who may be discontented may also have permission to go to Holland by the same opportunity. After taking the oath, soldiers and officers will be re-embodied to protect the Colony against pirates, &c., and will be paid by the Colony.”

This order did not please the soldiers and officers, who wanted to remain as long as possible without entering the English service, in hopes that either the Dutch, or their allies the French, might recapture the Colony. The English, on the contrary, having but a small force, wanted to get rid of the malcontents at once, so as to avoid difficulty, and therefore pressed the matter to a final decision. The Council wanted the soldiers to remain, for the protection of the river, but were quite willing to allow the departure of those who did not care to do this. A publication was issued in Demerara on the 3rd of June, calling on all soldiers, sailors and inhabitants, who were unwilling to take the oath, to give in their names and prepare to depart, but it does not appear that more than a very few cared to accept this offer, although the majority wanted to avoid the oath if possible. As so many objections were made to Captain INGRAM's order, it was repeated by Captain THOMPSON on the 10th, with the addition that “all persons shipping goods must take the oath previously, or else these (goods) will be subject to confiscation; and, all attorneys and managers of plantations belonging to merchants of Amsterdam or the Company, must immediately take the oath, or resign their trusts.”

As Admiral RODNEY had allowed six months' grace, these arbitrary decisions created a great deal of ill feeling, which lasted for several months. Those who had produce to ship thought it safer to take the oath, but the majority refused, especially in Essequibo, where the opposition was strongest. In Demerara, Captain DAY seems to have overcome the opposition to a great extent, as appears from the following Proclamation dated June 30th :—

"By GEORGE DAY, Commander of H. M. sloop *Surprise*, and Senior Officer of H. M. vessels in Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo."

"Notice: The oath of allegiance was taken to-day on board the *Surprise*, by the Commandeur, Council, &c., as follows :—

"I do most sincerely promise and swear, in the presence of Almighty God, that I will be firm and faithful, and bear true allegiance to His Majesty, GEORGE the Third, King of Great Britain, &c., &c., nor bear arms against him, or against the States of the Seven United Provinces, or any other European powers with whom that state is in friendship, or take up arms for them, as long as His Majesty shall keep possession of this Colony, which oath shall be in force and stand good, if approved of by Admiral RODNEY and General VAUGHAN, otherwise to be void, and considered as not having been made, and consequently everything to remain in the same situation as before.

So help me God !

"I shall be on board to administer it (Sundays excepted) until July 31. All persons refusing, must give their names to Mr. VAN BAERLE, Secretary's Office, and likewise to me, before that time, and get themselves in readiness to leave for Holland in a Cartel to be provided."

Before the form was settled, the oath contained, after the King's name, the words "will not bear arms against him in the war with France, Spain and Holland," but this being objected to, it was agreed to as above. As will be seen later, however, the dispute was by no means settled as yet, most of the inhabitants stipulating for the six months' grace.

Another cause of complaint was a notice by Captain THOMPSON on the 1st of June, that all the plantations belonging to merchants of Amsterdam were to be surrendered, and on the 27th of July, that the produce of the

same plantations must be shipped on board the *Lady Johanna*, after first deducting the expenses of the estates. This led to a great deal of ill-feeling against Captain THOMPSON, as it was considered a breach of the Articles of Capitulation, and was followed by a petition to Admiral RODNEY for his removal. This originated in Demerara, but THOMPSON thought that Essequibo would be more friendly, as may be seen by the following letter to Directeur-General TROTZ :—

Sir, Mr. GARDNER will have the honour of presenting this to Your Excellency, and of explaining to you an extraordinary piece of conduct of the Court of Demerary, which if you disapprove, as I suppose you must, you will be pleased, in two separate addresses to the General and Admiral, to declare your opinion in a protest against a measure conducted without your knowledge or approbation ; if your time had permitted you to have visited this river, I could have wished to have talked the matter over with you, but Mr. GARDNER will sufficiently explain the business.

To Governor TROTZ,

I have, &c.

ED. THOMPSON,

Essequibo.

Hyæna, Demerary.

The Council passed a resolution, disapproving the action of Demerara, but whether the protest was sent to the Admiral and General, does not appear.

The supreme authority in the two rivers, was vested in the Senior Officer of H. M. fleet, Captain THOMPSON being generally the chief, and, in his absence in Berbice or elsewhere, Captain DAY. Both of these Captains managed to offend the Dutch authorities, so that their relations became very much strained, especially in Essequibo. In January previous, complaints had been brought before the Council, that Spanish vessels were in the habit of coming and going to and from the river, without reporting to the authorities, which they considered dangerous, as it led to desertion of slaves. To prevent this irregularity it was ordered that a publication be made, imposing a fine of £1,000 on any one who should go on board such a vessel, or have any correspondence with the officers or crew, unless they had previously ascertained that the vessel had been properly entered at the Fort.

This prohibition did not have any effect, as it was necessary to consider a flagrant case on the 31st of March, where one Captain MATTHEO had stolen some boats and slaves, while the river was still under the sovereignty of Holland, and Spain therefore a friendly power. It was then resolved, without reference to the English authorities, who it must be remembered were at this time enemies of Spain, to send to the Governor of Spanish Guiana, under a flag of truce, to obtain redress. This having been done, the answer of the Spanish Governor was brought before the Council on the 6th of July, being as follows:—

Dear and Honourable Sir,—On Monday, the 26th day of last month, between the hours of two and three p.m. there arrived here at the Fort of Old Guyana, Mr. JOHANN NEUMAN, and followers, who were examined by Captain Commandant A. E. PASPRIE, so as to be allowed to pass in their canoe, under a flag of truce, to deliver a package of letters from your Excellency, which the Captain Commandant immediately forwarded by an express, kept in readiness for such purposes. After receiving the same, I issued orders for JOHANN NEUMAN to come up to this town, so that I might be enabled to acknowledge in person the receipt of your letter dated 31st of March of this year, and I here express my sympathy for your Excellency in learning from your communication, that on the 8th of the same month the said colony was surrendered into the hands of His Majesty of Great Britain, by reason that this power, according to the enemy's own statement, found themselves in dispute with the States General of the United Provinces; and that the garrison of the fort marched out with the honours of war, while to prevent all troubles and disturbances the government and magistracy remained on the same footing.

“I have also seen from your letter, the complaints against Señor MATZO, who some days before these events, being in the mouth of the River Essequibo, took possession of a small craft and five negro slaves, belonging to an inhabitant of the same colony, named J. MILLEKEN, and another with three negro slaves, belonging to another inhabitant named WILLIAM VERNON, who had borrowed the said craft from an inhabitant of Demerara named E. H. BIRMINGHAM, this having been done at one and the same time, notwithstanding that the whole of the River Essequibo was under the rule of the States General, from which rule it did not go until the 8th of the same month of March: That further on the 10th of the same month, some Spaniards, no doubt by order of the said MATZO, made themselves masters of a small schooner and all on board, the property of an inhabitant named

NICHOLAS GLAD, and a subject of their High Mightinesses : Further also, another craft, belonging to an inhabitant named T. H. NUYs, all of which your Excellency brings to my knowledge, in order that I may command the said MATEO to immediately quit your coast. And, on demand of Mr. JOHANN NEUMAN, who for that purpose was sent by your Excellency, that all the property above stated be returned, viz., what has been stolen by the said MATEO, and other Spaniards, who may have been present, according to the statement received from you. I express my sympathy for the troubles and hardships they are undergoing, from the servants of the King of Britain having made themselves masters of the possessions of their High Mightinesses the States General. I take this opportunity of informing your Excellency that the responsibility for the disposal of prizes taken by these privateers rests on the Intendant-General, Dr. JOSEF DEBALOS, residing at Caraccas, to whose High Court, all those who find themselves placed in the same position as Mr. GLAD, must take their cases for investigation, to find out if the capturers have acted against the letter of the law ; no other power being vested in me except that I am answerable for the prizes made. Having an earnest desire to do your Excellency's pleasure, &c., &c., &c.

ANTONIO DE PEREDO.

Guyana 6th May 1781.

This communication with the enemy annoyed Captain DAY so much that he wrote to TROTZ on the 3rd of July as follows :—

" I understand that a flag of truce has been sent and returned from the Oroonoko and will be glad to know by what authority she was sent there and on what account, and the copies of the letters she has brought you, &c., &c., and that no flag may be sent to Oroonoko or any other place, in future, without my knowledge and being under my orders."

At the Council meeting of June 10th Burgher-Captain BOTER and the inhabitants of the west coast of Essequibo sent a complaint of Spanish aggressions in that district. They had met at Bathsheba's Lust to deliberate on their deplorable state ; they regretted that the Council had taken no action, and agreed to bring the matter again to the notice of the Directeur-General. They now implored him to look into the matter and help them as soon as possible, also to compensate them for their losses through the raids of the Spaniards. If help was not given they knew not what would happen ; they expected to be ruined, as it was

reported that several large boats and canoes were in the Pomeroon, only waiting for the full moon and flood tide, to make another raid on the coast. They had already considered their means of defence, but on account of their number being insufficient and the absence of a Burgher-post, nothing could be done. They were willing to supply slaves in the proportion of one to thirty, and their contingent of Militia, if the other districts would help them, and therefore demanded assistance, intending if it was not given, to claim damages. On deliberation, the Council said they could not accept such a letter, Captain SEVERYN stating that he had already proposed to call out the Militia, but the Directeur-General had done nothing, at the same time protesting that something ought to be done. Notwithstanding this the letter was simply "taken for notification."

In the same letter in which Captain DAY had complained of the flag of truce, he called attention to the fact that Captain SEVERYN still sat in the Council, and had presided in the absence of the Directeur-General. He could only look on the Captain as a prisoner of war on parole, and, as the cartel had not yet sailed, it was open to him to take his passage, but in any case DAY would not take notice of, or answer, any communication in which SEVERYN was concerned. SEVERYN was of course very much annoyed, and at once resigned the office of Commissary, which he had held under an arrangement with Captain THOMPSON dated April 14th. It was then agreed that the "Train," consisting of the slaves and artificers, as well as the stores and provisions, should remain under the direction of the Commissary as before, but they were forced to admit that there was no provision for his retaining a seat in the Council, which he held as Captain Commandant.

The difficulties in the way of proper communication along the coast, both by sea and land, were much felt by

the English. They wanted to have the seaboard under observation, and the roads put in proper order, so Captain THOMPSON called the attention of the Councils of both rivers to these necessities. It was decided by Essequibo on April 14th, to have a lighthouse and sea mark on Demerara point, as a beacon, the costs to be paid in equal shares by Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo. This appears to have been intended for the east point of the river, where the present lighthouse is situated, and was considered by the Council of Demerara on the 21st of May, when it was also resolved to build a quay and dig a canal at the Brandwagt. Besides this there was to be another lighthouse at the point of Courabanna Creek, to pay for which a beacon tax was to be imposed. It was to be sixty feet high, and forty feet in diameter at the base, where it was to be ten bricks thick, the top being only two bricks, and the cost was estimated at £30,000 (\$12,000).

These and other matters, as well as the ordinary expenses of government, required funds, and as the inhabitants had lost heavily from their produce having been taken in the vessels by the privateers, there was a difficulty in raising enough cash to pay the ordinary salaries. In Demerara it was decided by the Council on the 21st of May, that "whereas the navigation to the Netherlands is stopped, and it is impossible to obtain bills of exchange to pay taxes, these be received in produce at the following rates, viz., cotton 14 stivers, coffee 5 stivers, sugar 2½ stivers per lb., and rum 16½ stivers per gln." This was published on the 18th of July, with the qualification on the last article, "good rum to sink the bubble at 26, in good casks." This and other Publications, were issued under the heading "By EDWARD THOMPSON, Esquire, Captain of the *Hyæna*, and Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's ships and vessels in Demerary, Berbice and Essequibo, on the Coast of Guiana, along the Spanish Main." Public busi-

ness was transacted on board either the *Hyæna* or the *Oroonoko*, the latter being also used for confining prisoners and runaway slaves. These vessels appear to have been stationed near the mouth of the river, while the Council of Policy met at several planters' houses in the neighbourhood, including those of Messrs. BOURDA, (*Vlissingen*) DE SAFFRON, (*Le Repentir*) and SWAEN, (*Kleyn Pouderoeyen*) as well as on Borsselen Island. It appears that the English had erected a fort near the mouth of the river, probably somewhere in front of Pln. *Labourgade*, now Cumingsburg, which they called Fort St. George, where official business was transacted from about the end of September.

On the 10th of August was published the Order in Council, confirming the Capitulation, His Majesty being graciously pleased to allow the colonies to be governed by their present laws, and the same taxes to be collected as formerly.

The six months' grace for taking the Oath, having nearly expired, the following Proclamation was issued in Demerara on the 29th of September by Captain THOMPSON:—

"The 9th October, 1781, the six months for taking the Oath of allegiance will have expired: All and every one who have not taken the oath, must repair to Fort St. George, on the 10th October; those refusing will be treated as enemies, their persons seized, and effects confiscated, or allowed to depart in a Cartel to be provided."

On the 4th of October THOMPSON wrote to Essequibo, enclosing a copy of the Oath, which he requested the Directeur-General to "have verbally and literally translated and administered in the manner of Holland," by a qualified person, in the presence of two witnesses and His Majesty's Commissary. A Proclamation was issued, similar to that of Demerara, calling the inhabitants to repair to Fort Zeelandia on the 14th, the oath being as follows:—

"I ———, in the face of Almighty God, do most solemnly promise and swear that I will be firm and faithful, and bear true allegiance to His

Majesty George the Third, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and that *I will defend him and these territories with my life and property* : So help me God !”

The Council in both rivers strongly objected to the words which are placed in italics. SCHUYLENBURG and the Council of Demerara, wrote a strong protest to Captain THOMPSON, to which he replied as follows :—

“Gentlemen,—In a letter I wrote last night, partly addressed to you and Mr. SCHUYLENBURG, I promised myself the honour of expostulating with you on the Capitulation, and nature of the oath therein pledged to be made, and I hope for the honour of the Court, I may be so successful, that the King may not be alarmed for the breach of fidelity in the Magistracy of his new colony of Demerara.

“When I parted with Captain DAY I issued a Proclamation to the inhabitants, recommending them to take the Oath of Allegiance if they shipped any produce, or it was liable to confiscation, according to the terms of capitulation ; but the colonists, deeming themselves in a state of neutrality from the 9th of April to the 9th October, chose to frame a neutral oath, under the direction and advice of Mr. SCHUYLENBURG ; to this the English inhabitants unanimously objected, and framed another. On my return I made a third neutral oath for the tender consciences of the Dutch gentlemen, who would not take that framed by the English, who had all objected to the first. This was a matter settled for the security of the capitulation in the intermediate state of neutrality, (for those) who shipped cargoes for Europe and the Isles, but is distinct and separate from the capitulation and its terms.

“But though I recommended, at this period, the Oath of Allegiance, it is obvious I had no authority to enforce it when I admitted a neutral one, which became of no effect, or force, or consequence, after the 9th day of October, when you pledged yourselves to become British subjects, and take the Oath of Allegiance to the British King, and which I now demand of your hands, in consequence of the solemn ratification you made with me for that purpose on the 9th of April last, therein pledging yourselves, after the expiration of six months, to perform the same. If you do not, I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of declaring the capitulation violated and void, and command a confiscation of the properties of those so refusing.

“I wait your reply this day only.”

I have &c.,

ED. THOMPSON.

H.M.S. *Hyæna*, Octr. 14th.

The Council wrote again to Captain THOMPSON, and on the 17th, at a meeting held in the house of Councillor BOURDA, the Commandeur stated that he had received a letter, in which the Captain declared that he would accept the oath proposed by them, leaving out the objectionable words, and that he was waiting at Fort St. George to administer the same. There being no objection, the Council proceeded to the fort and took the oath. On their return to Vlissengen, the Commandeur informed them that Lieutenant-Colonel KINGSTON had returned, and was now in the house, and that it was publicly reported that His Honour had been appointed Governor of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice, for which reason he proposed to invite Mr. KINGSTON to the meeting, to enquire if he had any Commission or credentials. Two Councillors and the Secretary having been deputed for this object, KINGSTON was introduced, and in answer to the request for information, replied that he had been appointed by General VAUGHAN, at the same time laying his Commission on the table. The document having been read, Governor KINGSTON took the oath of fidelity to the King, and his seat as President of the Council.

His first act was to direct that the Articles of Capitulation be read, which having been done, he enquired if they had taken the Oath of Allegiance, to which they replied that they had done so the same morning, and would have taken it sooner had it not been for some difficulties with Captain THOMPSON. The Governor then laid over the following explanation of General VAUGHAN in regard to the oath :—

“The colonies are not required to take up arms against
“the States of Holland until they shall be ceded by them
“to Great Britain.”

An objection was taken to the expression States of Holland, but as the Governor stated that the English usually

said Holland when they meant the United Provinces, nothing more was said.

The Governor then read the following :—

“ Lieutenant Colonel KINGSRON, appointed to the Government of these colonies by the King’s Commander-in-Chief, to preside in and govern according to all the terms of the Capitulation, thoroughly persuaded while residing among you, of the integrity and honour of the principal inhabitants, thought it his duty (though the General had from the first given him the option of remaining in your colonies) to represent to His Excellency in fuller terms than a letter would admit of, how much Demerary, Essequibo and Berbice, wanted his attention, both on account of the many respectable inhabitants, and the great value of those settlements.

“ The Lieutenant-Colonel continuing with you (however honourable and advantageous to himself) while some points of the Capitulation were imagined to be doubtful, could be of little service to you.

“ Having the welfare of your colonies very much at heart, and disdaining all private interests, he thought he could serve you better by explaining the imagined doubts in person ; this he undertook with pleasure, and had the satisfaction to find that he had entertained the same sentiments with the King’s Commanders-in-Chief respecting the Capitulation, and that all the terms thereof were to be understood on the most liberal construction.

“ The Oath of Allegiance, which alarmed many honourable men, (if it implied the taking up Arms against the States of Holland) is explained by the Commander-in-Chief of H. M. Land Forces, in the same manner as at Martinique during the late war.

“ His Excellency, General VAUGHAN, desirous to make you easy and happy to the utmost in his power, has directed that all persons are to be left in possession of their properties—and all attorneys (upon taking the Oath of Allegiance) are to remain in full possession and charge, agreeable to the Capitulation, unless the Lieutenant-Colonel may find particular reasons to alter it. Lieutenant-Colonel KINGSRON trusts the Dutch will not forget, that in this change of dominion from Holland to England, one great object of the King’s Commanders has been, to prevent as much as possible peaceable individuals from feeling the distresses of war, or families meeting with any interruption to their domestic comforts.

“ He also trusts that the English and other settlers in these colonies, will keep in mind the advantages they have formerly derived from the countenance and encouragement given them by the Dutch, and that this change will, by a return of attention, improve their harmony and friendship.

“ The French settlers will recollect how much Guadeloupe and Martinique flourished last war, under the English Government, and how greatly the

wealth of these islands increased while permitted to partake of the extensive commerce of England. Similar prospects of advantage are now open to them.

"The King of Great Britain, whose glory it is to promote the happiness of *all* his people, will be graciously pleased to extend the protection of his arms and convoys to these newly acquired colonies, in the same manner as to his natural born subjects.

"The English parliament have already prepared bills for admitting the produce of these colonies into British ports, upon the same footing with the West India Islands, and to allow the same advantages in all respects.

"His Majesty, ever attentive to the interests of his subjects, has, in the meantime, issued his order in Council dated the 10th of August 1781, for confirming the Articles of Capitulation granted by His Commanders-in-Chief to Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice, with all their dependencies, enlarging the benefits of that capitulation so that these colonies may share with all his other subjects, the extensive commerce of the whole British Empire. This distinguished mark of the Royal goodness to new subjects will naturally create a most grateful return on their part.

"To be offered (without solicitation) the government of these colonies, by both the Commanders-in-Chief of H. M. Forces, is so very honourable a mark of distinction, that while the command and direction rests with the Lieutenant-Colonel, the great object of his attention will at all times, be the welfare and prosperity of the whole. This can never be better effected than by the same application to your affairs that raised your colony to so flourishing a state, and by concord and unanimity among yourselves, which is recommended in the strongest terms, without distinction, to all the inhabitants of these valuable settlements.

"From a confidence in the honour of the principal people, when delegated a few months past by His Excellency General VAUGHAN to examine on his part, as Commander-in-Chief of H. M. Land Forces, into the state of the colonies, as well respecting all civil matters, as the state and quality of the artillery, arms, ammunition, and all other stores belonging to the Military department, Lieutenant-Colonel KINGSRON has returned to you single and unattended, to carry on the public business of government, without a guard for his person, or luggage, without the parade of Secretaries, suite, &c., and not so much as one person to be provided for at the expense of the industrious colonists. He has it also in charge from the General, at the same time, that all duties, taxes and fees, are to be paid to the English Government Officers, in the same manner as they have been paid to the Dutch; not to create any new places, nor imposts of any kind, in these colonies, without an order from the King's most Excellent Majesty.

"Lastly, the good of His Majesty's service and the happiness of the people, being a chief object of the Lieutenant-Colonel's Instructions, as

well as the great end of all governments, it is hereby directed, that the Administration of the Domestic Government in each colony be carried on by the proper Magistrates and Civil Officers in the regular course, for the good of His Majesty's subjects, with moderation, uprightness and candour.'

The Council replied as follows :—

"We, the Representatives of Demerary and its districts, assembled in Council, do heartily congratulate your Excellency on your safe arrival, and sincerely thank your Excellency for the kind sentiments manifested in your Declaration to us and the inhabitants at large. The same affords us all the comfort we wanted in the present circumstances, for nothing could be more agreeable from your Excellency to us, than the assurance given us that the terms of our capitulation are to be understood upon the most liberal construction, and *that you propose to make it the great object of your attention to promote the welfare of the whole, by the same application to our affairs that has raised the colony to its present flourishing state.*

"We acknowledge ourselves under great obligation to his Britannic Majesty's Commanders-in-Chief, Admiral Sir GEORGE RODNEY and the Honourable General JOHN VAUGHAN, for this new mark of their good will and affection to this colony, in having fixed the chief command thereof on a person esteemed for his eminent qualities and worthy character.

"No less are we indebted to your Excellency for your solicitude in providing, at many hazards and much fatigue, such explanations of, or rather a confirmation of what was meant in its origin, though abstractedly expressed in the general terms of the capitulation. We had nothing so much to ask for than the preservation of the rights acquired by hard labour on our possessions, and the continuance of those laws and privileges, under which they flourished and remain secure, which was as readily as generously granted to us by the aforementioned Honourable Gentlemen.

"We are happy to perceive that His Britannic Majesty has been graciously pleased to ratify those grants, and moreover to take the welfare of the colony so much at heart, as to make such a provision as will afford us the means to repair those heavy losses sustained by us at the sudden rupture of this unlucky war.

"We are happy also to find by your Excellency's pathetic exhortation and wholesome advice to the different natives, (*nationalities*) established in community here, that all countenance and encouragement shall be afforded as heretofore, to the industrious and the honest, without distinction. It will be our serious and constant study to concur with your Excellency in this, and in all possible endeavours in preserving that harmony from which their happiness is derived, and the welfare of the whole secured.

"However perplexed we may be in our present situation, we trust that, by your Excellency's wise measures, all matters of government will be

carried on with concord and such regularity, that neither of us may be liable to incur any just blame from those to whom we remain accountable.

"Unacquainted as we are with the forms that may be requisite for us to observe towards your Excellency, we wish, in compliance with our duties, not to be wanting in any of those essential points whereof the omission might convey the least inattention or disregard, it will therefore be highly pleasing to us to be guided and directed therein by your Excellency.

"We shall beg leave to observe to your Excellency, that formerly the total revenues of the Colony were remitted to the West India Company in Bills of Exchange and produce of all sorts. These revenues consisted, first, in a Poll Tax on every healthy labouring negro, of ten bits or a hard dollar per head, and in proportion less for such as were sick or infirm, children under twelve years of age being excluded. This tax the said Company obtained by Charter from the States, and used to employ in providing, partly for the defence of the colony, and partly to pay the salaries of her political and train officers and servants, such as Commandeur, Fiscal, Secretary, First Clerk, &c. Secondly, a Colony Tax, imposed annually by this Assembly on the heads of negroes, more or less, as the exigencies required, for matters of public utility, the erecting of indispensable edifices, and defraying the expenses attending the administration and execution of Justice, &c.

"This economy has raised the colony to its present pitch of eminence, as your Excellency beholds it, and by preserving it on the same system, its further progress will also be preserved. Meanwhile, we do assure your Excellency, that we shall always be ready to make such provisions as the nature of the case and the exigencies will make indispensable. We wish that all such humane exertions of your Excellency may be crowned with success, and that propitious Heaven will, without interruption, preserve your health, and bless us with perseverance in all principles of justice and equity."

This reply having been read, a Proclamation was ordered to be made, which was dated the same day, informing the inhabitants that Lt.-Col. KINGSTON of the 28th Regiment had been appointed President and Governor of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice. They were also notified at the same time, that the oath would be administered at the house of Mr. BOURDA on the 22nd and 24th, from 8 a.m. till noon, when all persons were expected to appear. The oath had now been settled, it simply containing the words, "I do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful

and bear true allegiance to H. M. King GEORGE, &c.," to which no objection was made. On the 7th November, another Proclamation was issued, giving notice that all Dutch attorneys might return to their positions on taking the oath. The Governor "trusted that the Dutch would not forget, that in this change of dominion the object of the King's Commanders is to prevent peaceable individuals feeling the distresses of war."

KINGSTON went to Essequibo on the 13th of November, and, after showing his Commission, assumed the presidency of the Council. By his conciliatory Proclamation and manner, he managed to reconcile the differences which had been produced by the arbitrary decisions of Captains DAY and THOMPSON. The Directeur-General and the Council of Essequibo were however still very sore, on account of the prominent attitude lately assumed by Demerara, which now claimed to be more important than either Essequibo or Berbice.

On the 30th of October, KINGSTON had called the attention of the Council of Demerara to certain complaints of Essequibo, in answer to which the following explanation was given:—

"Since the separation of the two rivers, the Directeur-General or Court of Essequibo, had no right to interfere in Demerara, which was always ruled by this Court separately. Any new tax for the colonies generally was deliberated upon in the Combined Assembly. Justice is administered here without reference to Essequibo. In cases affecting both rivers the Directeur-General called a Combined Assembly. As to the Directeur-General's complaint of the capitulation of this river without consulting Essequibo we give particulars. Vessels were taken in the river before we knew that war had been declared. In the morning five Privateers entered the river, and after giving and receiving several shot from the battery, demanded the surrender of the shipping then lying in the river, allowing us two hours' deliberation, not sufficient time for giving notice to Essequibo. No craft was allowed to pass, so that even if time had been granted, it could not have been done. As regards the sending of the two deputies, the matter only came up on the evening before their departure, as follows: GEORGE DAY and FRANCIS

PENDER, Commanders of H.M. Sloops of war *Surprise* and *Barbuda*, having taken this river under His Majesty's protection, came ashore in the evening and declared that they had no power to grant terms, but that Captain PENDER would depart next day to report to the Commander-in-Chief, whereupon it was proposed to send two gentlemen with him to obtain as favourable terms as possible. The time being so short, the gentlemen were hardly able to regulate their affairs, but Captain PENDER declaring that he neither could nor would remain longer, these gentlemen resolved to go, and did go. This plainly shows the impossibility of consulting Essequibo. When the deputies returned, they were cordially received by Essequibo. The two rivers separated in 1772."

At the meeting of the Council of Demerara, October 18th, a letter from Captain THOMPSON was read, in which he said that he wished the colony much happiness under Lieut.-Col. KINGSTON. The pressing need of a residence for the new Governor was then considered. As for the buildings on Borsselen Island they were quite dilapidated, and there was no proper place to erect new ones. Inspector CANNE had gone away, so there was no official that could be consulted, it was therefore proposed by the Commandeur that CHARLES TEUFFER be chosed as Inspector of Public Buildings, but Fiscal VAN GROVESTINS thought PETER JACOB a more suitable person. After some discussion, it was decided that the best place for the Governor's house was near the Brandwagt, and that the buildings should be placed in two rows, in the one to be placed the Court House, Secretary's Office, Orphan Chamber, Government House for high and low officers and servants, &c., while the other line might be granted to private persons. It was further resolved that the two builders, TEUFFER and JACOB, should each be asked to draw up a plan of the proposed buildings. This project for what afterwards became the town of Stabroek and the city of Georgetown, was made known to the inhabitants in a Proclamation of December 10th as follows :—

" Proclamation

"By ROBERT KINGSTON, Esqr., Lieutenant-Governor and President of the Colonies Demerary, Essequibo, Berbice, and dependencies, &c., &c., &c.,

"and

"The Commandeur and Councillors of the River Demerary and dependencies, &c., &c., &c.

"The state of the Government buildings for the public business of this Colony having been frequently taken into consideration, and the many inconveniences that arise from their present situation having been maturely deliberated upon, the Lieutenant-Governor and Court have come to a Resolution to erect proper buildings for Public Offices at the Brandwagt. Out of regard to the convenience and ease of the inhabitants, one building will be now erected, the other to be raised with all convenience and attention to the modes of payment; and, as there are no monies in hand, it has been found necessary to fix the Colony *Ongeld* at fl. 5, or five and twenty stivers per slave, without exception. Wherefore all and everyone are hereby ordered to give in the number of negroes they possess before the last day of December at the Secretary's Office, on pain of those that neglect it being proceeded against according to such penalties as have been directed before the Capitulation.

* * * * *

"Published in Rio Demerary the 10th December, 1781, by order of the Honourable House.

"JACS. ANDRIESEN, Jr.,

"First Clerk,

"Secretary's Office."

It was all very well to project a new set of buildings, but not so easy to get them erected. When the river was captured, the cash in both the Company's and Colony Chests had been confiscated, and the taxes were barely sufficient to pay current expenses. A carpenter was asked to estimate the cost of removing the public buildings from Borselen to the Brandwagt, but as he put it down at f12,000, the Council thought they could erect new ones for that. JOSEPH BOURDA offered a house frame, which he had prepared for himself, so as to save time, but whether this was accepted or not does not appear. On the 21st of

November the plan and estimate for a building, to contain a Council Hall, and rooms for the Governor and Secretary, was laid over. It was estimated at first to cost £25,000, but having been reduced to £17,500, the contract was given to a Mr. OVERBROEK, to be paid for in instalments, with six per cent interest on the balance. The Colony cash having been retained by Captain THOMPSON, a loan was taken from the Company's (now King's) Chest, to be repaid when the Ongeld was collected.

From a statement made in the Council on the 22nd of November, it appears that the revenue of Demerara was as follows, viz., Colony taxes :—Ongeld £6,000, Church and Poor £7,000, Vendue tax of one per cent £4,000; total £17,000. King's taxes :—Head money £18,000, Last money (Tonnage duty) £2,000; total £20,000. Besides these the export duties on rum, molasses and timber, would amount to about £9,000. The Company's revenue had amounted to something like £120,000, but this was made up by about £90,000 from the import and export duties paid in the Netherlands. From this, it paid its servants and the principal expenses of the colony, salaries being paid in assignats. The Ongeld varied according to circumstances and from it were paid the expenses of the Court of Justice, Orphan Chamber, compensation for negroes banished or executed, erection and maintenance of bridges over creeks and canals, boarding the Councillors when in session, part of the Predicant's salary, and the upkeep of colony buildings.

Captain THOMPSON had imposed tonnage dues of five stivers per ton for vessels below a hundred tons, and seven and a half stivers for those of heavier burden, to pay for the erection of a light-house, but this had apparently not been yet commenced. That gentleman had also made some land concessions, and appointed several new officers, without consulting the Council of Policy, which they thought a serious grievance. He had insulted the Fiscal,

L. T. D. VAN GROVESTINS, who resigned his office in January 1782, and was succeeded by ANTONY MEERTENS. The new officials having been called upon to show their appointments and give in their accounts, HENRY TOLLENDY appeared before the Council on the 20th of November, and laid over his authorisation as Deputy Collector of the King's Taxes, under VALENTINE JONES. He had received and paid to Captain THOMPSON $f18,725.10$, besides which he had on hand $f365$. He complained of the impossibility of collecting taxes; several persons had sent him the very worst produce, a certain high gentleman in Essequibo having paid in coffee, which was so very bad that he doubted if it could be sold at all.

As the Road Ordinance had not been complied with, a Proclamation was issued on the 5th November. All owners of estates, on the east from Borsselen to Courabanna Creek, and on the west from Borsselen to the Boerasirie Creek, were bound to make up a road for "foot and horse passengers," of the width of eight feet, before the last day of December, which road was to correspond with each estate, on pain of a fine of $f300$. Bridges were also to be erected, of at least six feet in breadth, and be kept in good repair, under a penalty of $f25$, those across the Canals, the Hobabo Creek, and the creek running through the land of the heirs of RYK HENDRIKSE (a bend of the Courabanna) being built and kept up at the expense of the colony, and twelve feet wide. The roads over the former Company's (now King's) paths, that were unsettled, must be kept in repair by the owners of the adjoining plantations, who would be allowed the use of them to grow provisions, until disposed of otherwise. Everyone was to have liberty to travel on these roads, either on foot or horseback, without hindrance or molestation in any way, on pain of a fine of $f100$. No one should dare to commit any insolence or brutality in passing, or ride out of the road, under a penalty of $f200$.

The carelessness of ship captains was considered in the Council on the 23rd of November. It had always been customary for vessels, when entering the river, to report at the Brandwagt, the Captain or first Mate coming ashore and exhibiting their papers, both on entering and going out, which custom had been neglected since the late abandonment of the Brandwagt. It was resolved to issue a Publication, that all vessels entering the river or departing, should be bound to anchor before Fort St. George, or between that and the former Brandwagt, when the Captain or first Mate must bring ashore the ship's papers and exhibit them to the Governor, from whom they would then receive permission to enter or go out further. As there were no soldiers to garrison Fort St. George, and this regulation could only be enforced by firing on those vessels which refused to comply, it was resolved to engage 25 men, and procure 20 cannon, the former to be paid in assignats at twelve months, receivable in payment of taxes.

At the same meeting it was stated that there were several persons in the river, who followed no trade, nor had any fixed residence, but lived on the plantations, to the great burthen of the owner, and tending to disturb the peace. It was resolved to give notice, that those who had no fixed place of abode be obliged to provide such before the 1st of March of next year, and give notice at the Secretary's Office, or leave the colony at once, all planters being warned not to lodge such idlers. This Publication was accordingly issued, idlers being warned, that if they did not immediately engage themselves in some employ proceedings would be taken against them.

The necessity for a jail was considered on the 18th of October. Prisoners had hitherto been kept in charge of the soldiers, and, since the capture by the British, on one of H. M. Ships. There were then two prisoners, one of them named EDWARD WADE, being under a charge of murder

and sentenced to undergo "sharp examination" or torture. Governor KINGSTON said that the prisoners might be secured on board one of the vessels, but as for the torture, he could not help remarking, "that in all places under the dominion of Great Britain, torture must be reckoned as unpermitted."

The tax and fee on the manumission of slaves was in existence at this time, as appears from the application of ENGEL LONCKE, who, on November 23rd, stated that "he had a child by one of his negro wenches called SUSANNA, which negro wench and child were still under the yoke of slavery, from which he wished to free them, and prayed the Court to grant such freedom."* This was not allowed at that meeting, he being told that the charges were to be paid first.

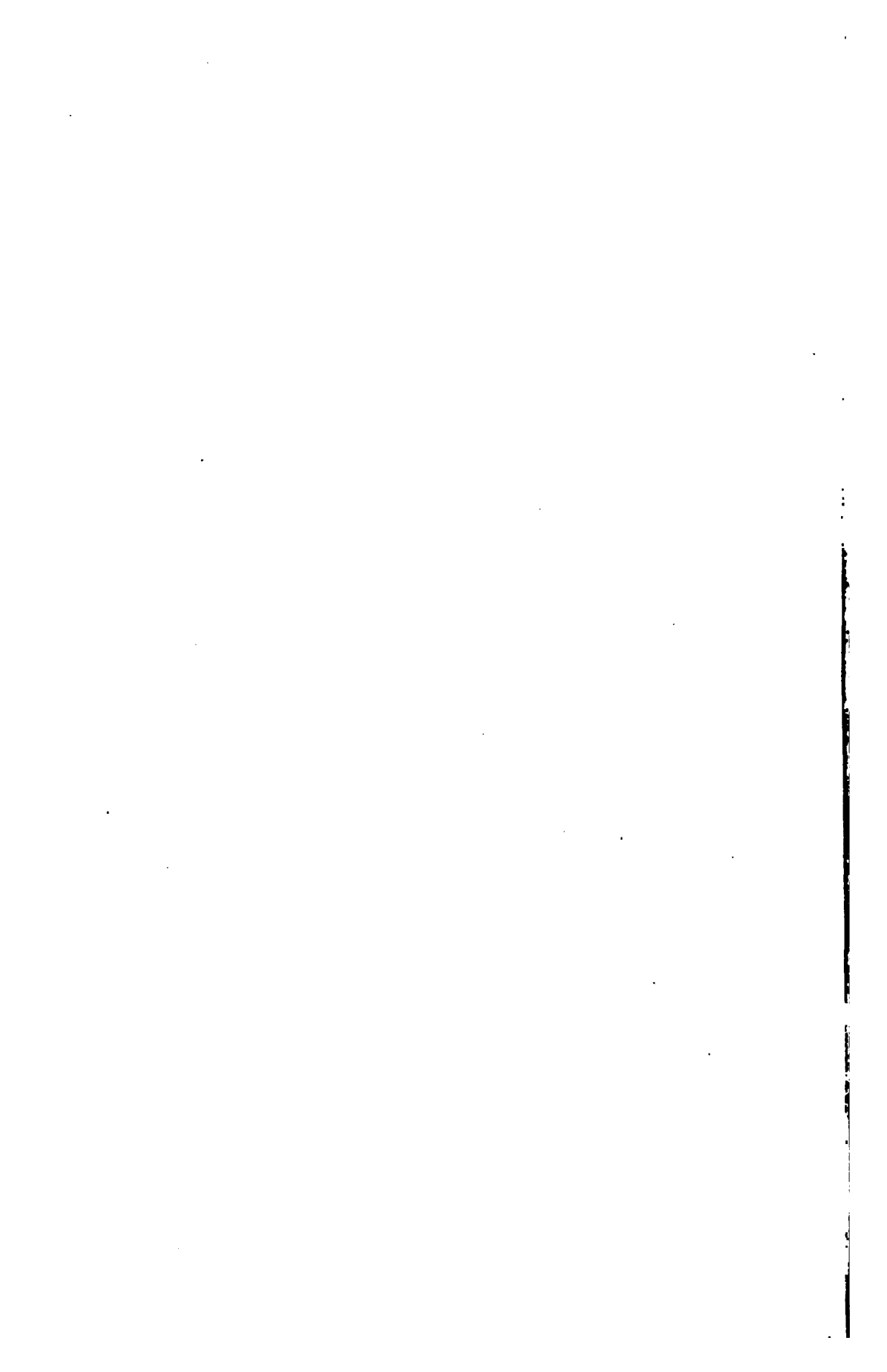
On the 24th of January 1782, the salary of Governor KINGSTON was settled to be £15,000, to be paid jointly by the two rivers and Berbice, but unfortunately the course of events prevented his receiving even an instalment of it. There is no doubt that he made a favourable impression on both Dutch and English colonists, as, although they suffered a great deal from the loss of their produce on the first raid by the privateers, and felt very uncomfortable under Captain THOMPSON, there is not the slightest sign of ill-feeling against KINGSTON. Essequibo, being under a cloud, naturally received less advantage than Demerara, which now took its proper position as the more important river of the two. A number of English settlers arrived from Barbados, some of whom received land grants, and, owing to the river being open to English merchants, trade increased to a considerable extent. Among the Publications of 1781, it is interesting to note, that on August 19th, the Revd. Mr. BAGGS was to preach at Borsselen Island. He

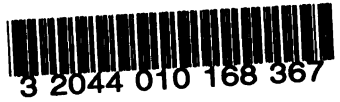
* The above quotation is in the words of the Dutch translators, the minutes being in both languages.

was probably one of the Army or Navy Chaplains, and the first clergyman of the English Church allowed to officiate in the government buildings.

[END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.]

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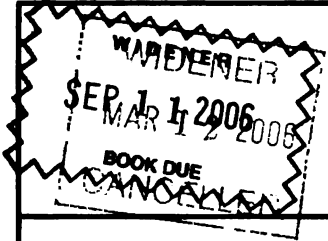




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